

THE Saturday Journal

A POPULAR PAPER

WEEKLY

PLEASURE & PROFIT

Vol. I. No. 16.

BEADLE AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,
98 William Street.

NEW YORK, JULY 2, 1870.

TERMS: \$2.50 per Annum, in advance.
\$1.25 for Six Months.

Price 5 Cents.

WRECKED.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

The sun is red and bright,
And the sky is fair and blue—
A fall of gleaming light
Shuts off the western view,
Where the proud hills lift up
Their altars of gold,
And hold, as in a giant cup,
Plain, meadow-land and wood.
But something is amiss:
A grief without a name—
The winds that come my brow to kiss,
Shrink backward at the flame!
The flame that lives and burns
Within this heart of clay,
That leaps and shrieks, and yearns
To reach the brighter day.
Wrecked on the cold gray sands,
Where wild waves pitiless
Reach up their death-wild hands,
My trembling ones to me
Dead, dead, as the dead,
Beckons me out to sea;
My weary lot is cast—
Wrecked on the lee.

The Masked Miner:

OR,
THE IRON-MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER.
A TALE OF PITTSBURGH.

BY WM. MASON TURNER,
AUTHOR OF "UNDER RAIL," "SILKEN CORD," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

MOUNT WASHINGTON ROAD—AFTER DARK.

The miserable rain still descended, and a dismal night settled down on every thing. The open carriage, with its occupants, proceeded slowly—so slowly, indeed, that the restive bays shivered with cold, as they labored on up the rear face of the lofty hill—Mount Washington. It was certainly seven o'clock; the darkness was intense, and the driver cautiously paused now and then, and peered ahead to be certain that he was going in the right direction.

Grace Harley, silent and frightened, shrunk away to the far corner of her seat. The young man, carefully, tenderly drew the wrappings closer around her, as if to reassure her.

"I am so sorry, Miss Grace, that I have brought you into this scrape!"

"Say nothing of it, Mr. Somerville. Our object, now, is to get back as soon as possible. I am chilled through, and papa, I know, is very uneasy about me."

Fairleigh Somerville did not answer at once, but still continued busying himself with the dash apron, and in tucking in the wrappings around his fair charge.

"Was a stupid mistake of mine, Miss Grace," he said, at length. "I took the wrong fork in the road, though I've been this way often enough to have known better. As soon as we clear the precipitous ascent, I can promise you that my bays will go fast enough."

Several moments passed in silence, the bays still leisurely bending to their work, and drawing the light vehicle on toward the top of the dizzy hill. The rising breeze, wet and cold, blowing more steadily, told them they were nearing the summit of the black mountain.

Fairleigh Somerville turned uneasily in his seat, disconcerting, as he did so, the wrappings spread over their laps, which he immediately busied himself to rearrange. He peered around him, to the right and to the left, in front and behind, and he spoke often to his horses.

All at once the young man turned to his fair charge, and said, in a low, insinuating voice:

"Pardon me, Miss Grace, pardon me; I would like to say just one word or so to you now. Can I speak, Miss Grace?" and he thrust his face insinuatingly, impudently, close to hers.

The maiden drew her veil, now wet and limp with the searching mist, closer around her face, and shrank still further away. She trembled in every limb for a moment, but by an effort recovered herself.

"I can not say nay, Mr. Somerville; but, can you talk and drive, with sufficient care, too?"

She evidently wished to avoid hearing what he had to say—to throw him off his guard. But Somerville, now that he had broken the ice, would not turn back. He still leaned toward her, and peered straight at her.

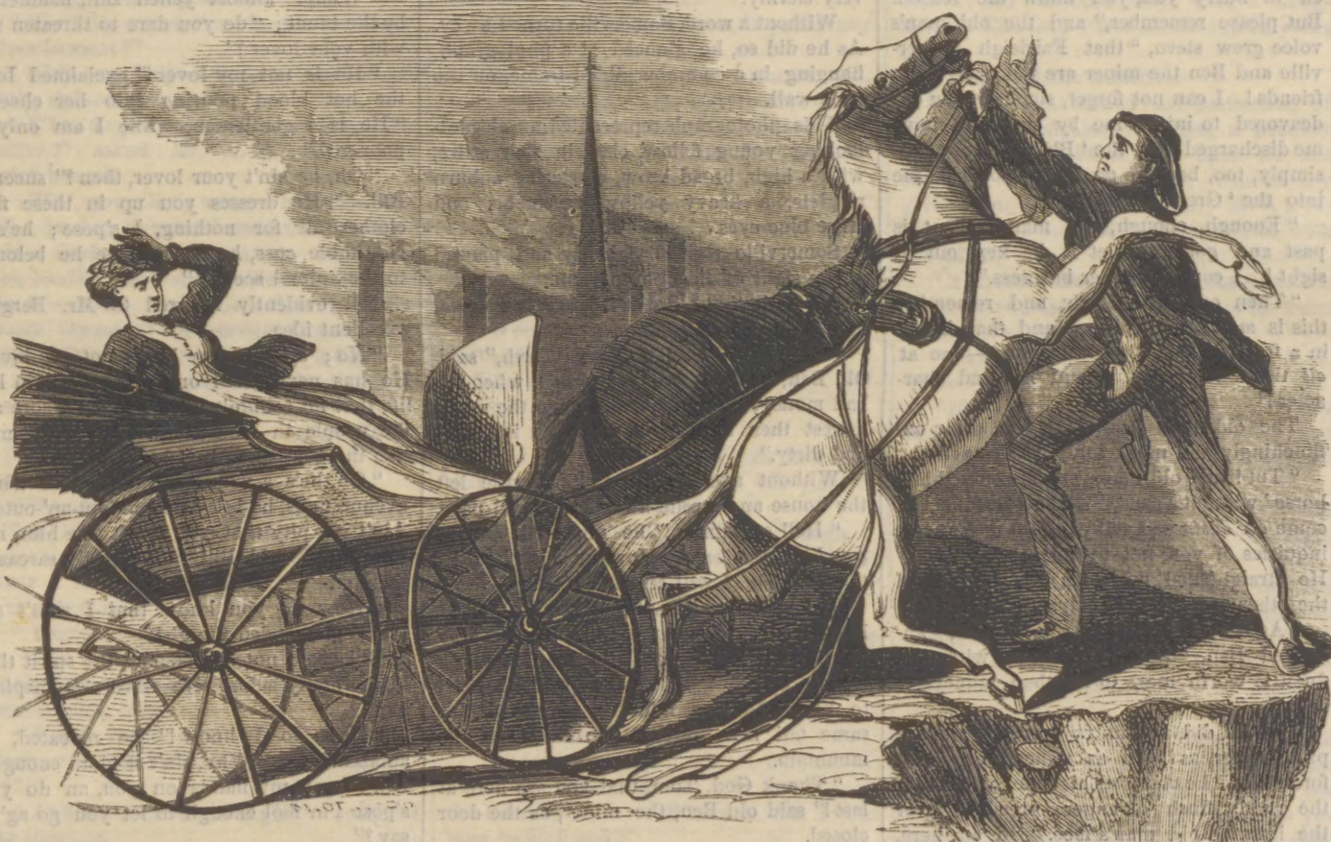
"Yes, Miss Grace, I can do both; the horses are safe; they know the road as well by night as by day, and, pardon me, Miss Grace, it does not take long to say—that, as of old, despite your frowns and your every mark of discouragement, I love you still!"

The girl started, as a wild shudder crept over her frame, and cowering in her seat, she said not a word.

"I have never ceased to love you, Grace, since the moment I saw you on your return to your native city, and," continued the young man, with increasing fervor, "my love grows stronger as the days, weeks and months roll by. This, though a strange opportunity, yet, is a fitting one for me to tell you this. I have waited patiently for some bright sign to come from you, Grace—waited these two long years of sorrow to me—patiently. I have endeavored to show you by my devotion, and by every other means in my power, that you still were very dear to me. Your father's consent I have already obtained!"

Grace Harley writhed in her seat, and, do what she could, a half-groan burst from her.

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SUDDENLY, AN ARM OF IRON AND A GRIP OF STEEL WERE FASTENED ON THE BRIDLE.

Fairleigh Somerville heeded neither; he was now trembling with pent-up emotion, of whatever nature it was. "His consent has long since been given me, and now, Grace, yours only is wanting. I am rich and young; I again tender you my wealth, a strong, right arm as a defense, a loving breast for a pillow to you. Tell me, Grace, if you can not love me in return, or give me some slight token whereby I may be encouraged to hope for your final consent."

Still Grace Harley answered not, and as the young man paused, she turned as if to leap from the vehicle. But she controlled this impulse, and in a calm tone, spoke:

"You are right, Mr. Somerville, in saying that this place, after all, is fit for what you have spoken. Please consider it an equally suitable spot for saying what I shall, in reply. As before, I appreciate the offering you have laid at my feet, but, as before, I can not accept it. Though time has rolled by, it has brought no change in my views on the subject of which you have just spoken. I do not love you, Mr. Somerville, and must beg, now, that this be my final answer."

"And you love another, I suppose, Miss?" asked the man, suddenly and rudely.

The girl answered promptly:

"I did not say it, Mr. Somerville, and I can not answer such questions. Let us drive on home."

"You still love the memory of that contemptible wayside beggar; but he cares not for you; he has gone—forever!"

"Sir!" exclaimed the girl. "I am under your escort, Mr. Somerville, and I trust to you to conduct me home to my father."

"Pardon me, Miss Harley, if I seemed rude," said the young man, after a slight pause; "my emotions got the better of me; and—ah! here we are at last at the top."

Sure enough, showing dimly under the carriage, and a few yards in front of them, lay two roads, indicating that they had reached the summit of the mountain. One of the roads ran along for a short distance, on the top of the dizzy ridge, and then, gradually, it drew behind the summit of the great hill.

The other skirted along the very edge of the precipitous light itself, overlooking the Monongahela, at least fifteen hundred feet below. This was known as the Mount Washington road, and, at all times, even in the day, is considered a giddy and a break-neck drive—the road, in many places, crumbling into the very chasm, and hardly wide enough for a carriage to pass without risk of rolling over the ledge.

For a moment, young Somerville hesitated, and then coolly turned his horses' heads and drew them into the last-mentioned road, overlooking the dark river far beneath. At the same time, he struck the spirited steeds viciously with his whip. In an instant they darted forward, and the light carriage spun along the lofty edge, its wheels dislodging the earth, on the dizzy brink of the beetling cliff.

"Good heavens, Mr. Somerville!" exclaimed the girl, in terror; "you are surely not going to try the dangers of this road on such a night? Oh! do—do stop—do stop—and let me get out!" and she clung to his arm.

"Do not embarrass my movements, Miss Harley," returned the man, in a harsh, cold tone, "or you'll have both of our necks broken, in a very few moments."

And the steeds still dashed on—the light vehicle rolling and jerking under the impetus, in fearful proximity to the ledge.

"Oh! I beseech you, Mr. Somerville, turn back—turn back!"

"Turn back? Why, Miss Harley, have your senses forsaken you? It would be sure death to attempt to turn back now, and I can scarcely hold the horses. Be steady! be steady! All depends on the sure-footedness of the horses, now."

His tone was very serious, and Grace felt him tremble. On they dashed, and now the narrowest part of the road was reached—the loftiest and dizziest, too. Fairleigh Somerville glanced quickly around him, in every direction, and then exclaimed, in a loud voice, "Halloo, there!"

Before the echo of his words had died away, suddenly two brawny men started, as it were, from the very shade of the roadside and sprung toward the vehicle. One seized the reins, and pulled down the clamping horses; the other dashed for the carriage. Somerville sprang to his feet and raised his whip, but at that moment, was hurled out heavily to the road. The horses took fright, and bursting from the man who stood by their head, darted off at a fearful pace along the giddy path.

Grace Harley had sunk back fainting, in the buggy. Suddenly a tall, sinewy figure stood in the way of the flying horses, and an arm of iron and a grip of steel were fastened on the bridle by the head, as the horses' feet were raised almost over the fearful chasm.

The struggle was desperate between that stalwart man and the maddened steeds, and the earth crumbled beneath his feet, and rolled down the mountain side, under his efforts. But he gradually pressed the smoking animals back—back; and then he dashed to the side of the carriage.

"Thank God, Miss Grace, that you are saved!" he exclaimed, in a deep, laboring breath.

Before he could assist her to alight, he was struck a fierce blow on the temple, and sunk tumbling to his knees.

"That for you, Tom Worth! you intruding scoundrel!"

When the brave man had recovered his senses, the carriage and all had disappeared—not a trace was left behind.

The man slowly rose to his feet and glanced about him, and then, without any word, took his way as swiftly as he could, down the Mount Washington road.

CHAPTER V.

THE DAY AFTER.

LATE THAT night, the one of startling adventure on the dizzy light of the Mount Washington road—later by far it seemed than there was any necessity to be, judging from the distance to be traversed—an open buggy, drawn by two dashing steeds, after clearing the long stretch of the Suspension bridge, whirled rapidly up Front street, in Allegheny city, clattered around into Stockton avenue, and drew up in front of the elegant mansion of Mr. Richard Harley, the retired iron-merchant.

Despite the lateness of the hour, however, lights were still gleaming in the hall-way, through the transom over the door, and were shining here and there through the large house.

The driver of the buggy paused a moment and glanced around him. He was alone in the vehicle, and he laughed low, as he noted the glancing lights in the hall and house.

"Too bad! too bad!" he muttered, "to come back with such news! And yet it will not seriously hurt him! Time flies; I am sleepy; and now I must break the tidings! Here goes!" As he spoke, he cast the reins loosely over the dash-board, and left the panting horses to take care of themselves.

Assuming a shambling, uncertain gait, as if he was hurt, the man walked up the gravelled way, and pulled furiously on the bell. Almost in an instant the door was opened by old Mr. Harley himself—terror and anxiety on his face.

"Ah! Mr. Somerville! So glad you have come! And Grace—Grace! She is not

with you! Why stayed you so late? and we were so anxious, and why—what is this? what is this, Mr. Somerville? You hurt, and where—where is Grace—speak, sir? Speak at once!" and the old man advanced threateningly toward him.

But Fairleigh Somerville, pushing rudely by the old man, who now stood with starting eyes and clasped hands, sunk as if exhausted into a chair, and groaned aloud.

"Wait—wait, sir, but a moment!" interrupted the young man, speaking in a labored voice. "Wait until I can speak, and I will tell you all!"

"Yes, tell me all, Fairleigh Somerville!" said the old man, in a stern voice; "and, mark you well—if you have harmed my child, a father's vengeance will not spare you!"

The old man's frame quivered as these words, hot and earnest, fell distinctly from his lips.

Young Somerville half sprang to his feet, forgetting his hurt, and pain; but, almost instantly, he sunk down, groaning and muttering.

"You need not menace me, Mr. Harley," he said, slowly, "and I am not now in a condition to reply properly to your insinuations—may, your downright unjust charge. I am hurt—badly hurt, in defense too of your daughter!" He paused as if for breath.

"Oh, God! Mr. Somerville; forgive me! I know not what I am saying; but haste—haste and tell me of my daughter! My heart is bursting—and she—she is my all!"

Still Somerville spoke not; and could the wretched old father have seen the half-demoniac smile—not of triumph exactly, but demonic, nevertheless—that flitted over the face, and curled the mouth of the young man, his hand had not spared him.

"Be seated, Mr. Harley, and send the domestics away," at length said Somerville, in a low tone, looking up, and motioning the old man to a seat.

At a sign from the master, who at the same time sunk languidly into a chair, the several white-faced, frightened servants left the hall-way.

"Listen, Mr. Harley," began the young man, "and do not interrupt me. I must hurry through and hasten home, for I am sadly in need of surgical aid."

"Go on, Mr. Somerville," said the old father, huskily.

"We—Miss Grace and myself—took a long and pleasant drive along the new way recently cut behind Mount Washington. The rain continuing, and your daughter expressing a desire to return, I turned my horses around, and set out homeward again. Whether it was owing to the lateness of the hour, the gloom hanging over every thing, or to the newness of the road to me, inadvertently, at all events, I took the wrong road, and—"

"Is this true, Mr. Somerville—true before God and man?" and the old man looked straight in the other's eyes.

Somerville hesitated, and this time he did half quail, and his eyes wandered nervously away from the fixed gaze of the other. Then a red flush passed over his face, and he replied very sternly, and angrily:

"You are an old man, Mr. Harley, and have much to excuse you; but, sir, I can not listen longer to your innuendoes, and insults!"

"Excuse me—forgive me, Mr. Somerville! I am almost crazy! Say on! say on!"

"Well, sir—and no more such unpleasant interruptions, if you please—I at last managed to find my way back to the main road, and at length reached the top of the mountain. I then entered the ledge road."

"The ledge road! and on such a night! Why, sir—"

"Hear me through, or not at all, sir! I

entered that road, because I could not prevent it. My horses had already pulled into it, and I dared not think of attempting to turn round then. Indeed, it was impossible to do so, as you know, sir."

The old man impetuously nodded his head.

"Well, sir," resumed Somerville, "we had proceeded safely on our way, for a quarter of a mile, when, reaching that portion of the road which overhangs the deepest chasm on the way, and which is unprotected by fence or wall, suddenly two villains dashed out from the roadside. In an instant I was hurled from my carriage, and to the earth by a murderous blow! I saw one of the men rush for Miss Grace; then the horses took fright, and darted away for the cliff."

"At that moment a man suddenly sprang from the gloom by the roadside and gripped the horses by the reins. I saw him bear them back, inch by inch, and then, just as my senses forsook me, I saw him by the carriage. How long, insensible, I lay there, I can only now tell, for the hour is late. But, when I recovered my senses, I found my horses tied securely to the stock of an old tree, by the wayside; but, of the villains or the man who had borne the horses back from the precipice, and of Miss Grace, I could see nothing!"

We will not attempt to portray the anguish of the stricken father; nor the wretchedness that prevailed that night in the Harley mansion.

The next day the papers were filled with accounts of the terrible outrage. After detailing, in the usual high-flown language, the enormity of the crime, they went on to speak of the man who had so opportunely arrested the flying steeds. He had indeed become a hero, for the daily journals referred to him, and one concluded its article thus: "The name of the gallant fellow, who, by a superhuman effort, forced back the fiery steeds, and saved Miss Harley, daughter of our esteemed citizen, Richard Harley, Esq., of Allegheny City—saved her, alas! it may be for a worse fate—has been found out to be Tom Worth. The man is a common laborer, in the Black Diamond coal mine; and though his name and calling be humble, yet it should not be forgotten by a generous public, and those who recognize and love true heroism!"

CHAPTER VI.

OLD BEN, THE MINER.

OLD Ben Walford, the veteran miner, walked slowly up and down the limits of his little cabin, nestled on the verge of the Coal Hills.

It was late at night, and a single lamp alone illuminated the darkness of the small apartment. The old man paused occasionally in his promenade, to listen to the wind, which sighed and sung so mournfully around the corners, and under the eaves of his little cabin. But, shaking his head, he again resumed his walk; he had heard no welcoming step outside, crunched along toward his lonely little tenement, and was getting impatient and anxious.

Old Ben, the miner, as he was generally known, was a "character" around Pittsburgh—or, rather, in his little circumscribed world there. Almost everybody knew him, and all who did know him respected him for his worth, independence and real nobleness of character. In the working of a mine, in any particular, whether in sinking a shaft, or making a level, or indicating the rise and dip of a coal "drib," the old man's judgment was sought and heeded; for his opinions were based on a quarter-century's experience in the far-aw-y celebrated Cornish mines, and his decisions were, in every instance, sound and trustworthy. Yet, in giving his "opinions," he was unpretentious and simple as one of the little "rolley-boys" of the mine.

Although so many knew Ben, and knew him so well, yet, strange as it may appear, they indeed knew very little of him. He did not have many acquaintances—that is of his own choosing and making, and he cared only for a very few friends. Among these friends was one who has been mentioned in this previous story—Tom Worth, the young miner, who, it seemed, worked day by day along with Ben in the Black Diamond mines, lying next to the Great Allegheny shafts.

These two men, one over a half-century in years, the other a little past one-third so old, were very intimate, though they differed so much in personal appearance and attributes, and in almost every other particular save in lofty and powerful physique. How true they were to one another—how devoted and disinterested their friendship, will be seen in the course of this romance.

The two men were strangers to each other—the younger having just entered the mine as a laborer—where, on a certain day, as one of them was lighting a fuse, for blasting away some obstruction in the shaft, about midway down, the light by some means was applied too soon. The explosion was imminent, and the bucket, which hung near, was too small to convey both men at once away.

The two strong men shuddered, as they saw certain death staring them in the face, for it was certain death to abide the springing of the powder-charge; and they stood in mute despair, gazing at the fuse, burning nearer, nearer to the fatal fulminate.

"Go, Tom!" said the old man, in a low voice, pointing to the bucket. "Go! I am old, and my days are almost over, any way! You are young and can be happy! Go!"

Thus spoke the old miner.

"No, Ben, no! Into the bucket with you! You are old and shall die in peace! I am already old in the world's misery, with not a living soul to miss me when I am gone. Go, go, Ben! and think of me once, when I am dead!"

So spoke the younger man.

"Never!" returned old Ben, and the fuse now flashing and scintillating, and the terrible powder only three inches away from the greedy creeping fire.

"Nay, but by heavens! you shall, old man!" and with a bound the young man sprang forward, clutched the old man by the waist, and, with a giant's strength, handed him safe into the bucket, giving the signal at the same time to those above to hoist away!

As the bucket shot rapidly upward toward daylight, and safety, the young man, deep down in the black shaft, bowed his head and waited.

Then came the deafening shock, and the earth itself seemed to quake.

Ten minutes of awful silence, and then the bucket was slowly lowered again; in it, like an iron man, sat old Ben Walford—his eyes staring down far below him, in the smoke and gloom, his brawny neck pulsating under the heavy strokes of the arteries beating in it.

Down, down! The old man could not go fast enough; and now the place has been reached; and, yes, God be thanked! what joy rioted in the old man's bosom then!

There, under an artificial arch of stone, made by the powerful blast itself, crouched the powder-scorched and grimy man, Tom Worth—the noble! untouched, unharmed, safe!

And there, in the darkness of that black shaft—there in the terrible solitude, in that deep pit in the earth—the old Cornish miner drew the young man to his bosom, and in a scarcely audible, husky voice, murmured:

"THANK GOD!"

Such was the tale the miners would tell you—with an almost reverential manner—of the great friendship between Ben, the old Cornish miner, and Tom Worth.

Still old Ben paced up and down the narrow confines of his snug little cabin—occasionally waiting by the door, and listening, as if for some welcome sound to reach his ears.

Ben Walford, the miner, was verging on to sixty-two years of age, and yet we would not think so old, judging from the vigorous growth of iron-gray hair that clustered on his broad, furrowed forehead, and fell in unrestrained masses upon his neck. Much less would we judge him so, from the magnificent muscle and brawn of that erect, towering, athletic figure. Yet old Ben said so himself, and there was no denying it.

And this evening the soot and grime of the mine were washed away, showing a remarkably fine face—at once indicative of firmness, honesty, candor, courage and gentleness. A fine-looking, good-looking, hearty old man was Ben Walford, the miner.

He suddenly paused again, and stepping to the door, opened it and peered out into the darkness for several minutes. Then he closed the door again, shutting the cold, disagreeable air out from his warm cabin.

"Confound it!" he muttered. "Strange that boy don't come! I haven't seen his dear face since yesterday morning in the west gallery. Has he come to harm in the pit?—has he—no, no, for he left the mine at four o'clock in the afternoon—so the overseer told me. And then last night, all night long, I waited for him, and kept his supper hot for him, and he didn't come! Nor to-day! What can be the matter? And there, on the fire now, is his supper, waiting for him to come and eat it!"

"There's something strange about Tom Worth," and the old man sunk his voice, even lower than usual. "Something that is very queer, and he has never told it to me! Is he afraid to trust his secret with old Ben? No, no! He's an honest boy—a good boy, and if he wishes to say nothing to me, why, of course, it's all right, and—Ha! here he is, at last!" and the old man bounded to the door, and let down the latch, as a heavy step echoed harsh and loud along the narrow, flinty mountain path, alongside of which the cabin was perched.

In a moment there came a loud rap at the door. The old man paused and started back.

"Very strange!" he muttered. "Come in, Tom, my boy," he continued, opening the door. "What do you mean by rapping at—Ah! Is it you, Mr. Somerville? Come in, sir, and tell me how I can serve you"; and the old man's face wrinkled in to a dark frown, as the hawk-like, saturnine features of Fairleigh Somerville slowly emerged from the gloom, and showed in the dim light of the miner's solitary lamp.

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNWELCOME VISITOR.

A heavy, vindictive frown sat likewise on the face of the young millionaire, and a dare-devil, independent look glanced from his eyes, as he unhesitatingly entered the room, and glared quickly around him.

He unbuckled his overcoat, and removing his cap from his close-cut hair, struck it several times over his knee to get the moisture from it.

The old miner glanced at him, suspiciously but fearlessly, and a still darker and more ominous frown came over his scarred face as he noted the cool, overbearing deportment of this strange visitor.

"Well, sir," he said, boldly but respectfully, "if it suits you to speak now, please say on, and tell me what brings you here. I am at your service, sir, but, you need

not be told, Mr. Somerville, that a miner's time is precious, and sleep very grateful after twelve hours spent two hundred feet below the ground, in a bad, unwholesome air."

As he spoke, the old miner seated himself, rather impatiently, opposite his visitor.

"In my own good time, Ben Walford—in my own good time! I am not used to being hurried," replied Somerville, with the utmost *serre froid*, coolly stretching his limbs—which, by the by, seemed to have recovered entirely from his hurts of the night before.

Old Ben's heavy right hand contracted fearfully as he half arose from his chair; but he controlled himself, and quietly sat down again.

It was not the sight of a heavy revolver protruding from young Somerville's overcoat pocket, that deterred the old man; he simply obeyed the better teachings of his nature.

"Very good, Mr. Somerville," he said, quietly; "take your own time; if I wished to hurry you, you know the reason. But please remember," and the old man's voice grew stern, "that Fairleigh Somerville and Ben the miner are not over-warm friends! I can not forget, sir, how you endeavored to injure me by trying to have me discharged from the 'Black Diamond'—simply, too, because you could not bribe me into the 'Great Alleghany'!"

"Enough, enough, old man! That is past and gone, and let it be kept out of sight! I come on other business."

"Then out with it, sir, and remember this is my cabin, my home, and that, living in a free country, I am a freeman—one at all times ready to defend life and character!"

The old man looked at the other unflinchingly and menacingly, as he spoke.

"Tut! tut! old man; you are on a 'high horse' without a cause," said Somerville; "I come on business, I tell you—to make some inquiries of you, not to quarrel with you." He straightened up in his seat, and faced the other more respectfully.

"As I said before, very good, sir," answered Ben, "time is precious with me, for it is worth more to me than money—it is health."

"Ha! I did not know that you were a philosopher, as well as a miner, Ben Walford; but," he changed his tone, as he saw the ruddy flush of anger spreading over the insulted old man's face. "I am here, on this miserable, nasty night, on business—that business with your companion—your room-mate," and he looked straight at the other.

"My room-mate?"

"Yes; does not Tom Worth live here with you?"

"He does. I am expecting him now, every minute, and thought a bit about your footstep was his. What do you want with Tom Worth, Mr. Somerville? He's an honest man, and he'll not be bribed into the 'Great Alleghany,' if that's what you come for, I can tell you!"

"Blast the 'Great Alleghany' and Tom Worth, too!" exclaimed Somerville, angrily.

"I'd advise you," said Ben, in a low but distinct voice, "not to let Tom Worth hear you say such of him; and I tell you again, sir, this is my cabin."

Fairleigh Somerville saw that he was going too far. So with a light laugh he said apologetically:

"A slip-of-the-tongue, that meant nothing, Ben. But time flies. Have you heard that Tom Worth saved Miss Grace Harley from death last night?"

"Yes, sir; I read it in the papers. Tom is the man to do that thing. He has nerve and muscle; but the papers said the horses were yours, Mr. Somerville! Where were you, and what were you doing on the mountain at that time of night and in such weather?"

"By Heaven, you're bold and impudent, old man! What business is that to you? And Tom Worth, if he tells the truth—"

"He never lies!" fairly hissed the old man.

"Well, then, he'll tell you that I was knocked down, senseless, by one of the ruffians. But, to business: I believe Tom Worth to be the third villain, and that he has abducted Miss Harley!"

Old Ben Walford sprang to his feet, his eyes fairly flashing fire.

"Heed well your words, Fairleigh Somerville! In matters of this sort, Tom Worth is Ben Walford, and what you say of him I will take to myself! Tom Worth is an honest man, if one walks on God's green earth. And—I am bold to say it—perhaps you know something of this affair, more than Tom, save that he acted the part of a man!"

In an instant Somerville sprang to his feet, and his hand fell on the butt of the pistol, his face half-livid, half-pale, yet working and writhing with passion. But, he was not too quick for old Ben Walford. The latter had kept his eye, as he spoke, upon his visitor, and, as he saw the other grasp his pistol, he suddenly drew from his bosom a pistol, likewise, and covered the young man's breast with its black muzzle.

"Let go your pistol, Fairleigh Somerville," he said, in a low, determined voice, keenly watching the other the while, "or my finger will pull the trigger!"

Somerville slowly removed his hand; and his face, as he did so, was as white as a grave-stone. He rose to his feet.

"I came to see this young man," he said, in a tremulous voice, though his eyes glared like those of a buffalo-tiger, "and learn from him, which it were not difficult to do—for innocence needs no defense—of the part he played in this affair was, simply, the heroic! If it was, I intended to reward him myself, that was all."

"And I tell you, sir," replied the old man, slowly putting his pistol away, "take your lesson to yourself, and learn this, that Tom Worth accepts no money but that for which he works and gains honestly. That is more than many can say!"

"You speak bravely, old man," said Somerville, a little faintly, now that the pistol was removed; "and I'll say to you that this matter shall not drop here; I will see if this fellow was implicated in that affair. I'll spend every dollar I have, if needed, in the effort, and if he is guilty he shall be punished! Do you understand that?"

"Yes, and I laugh at you! Tom Worth's character, thank God! is not in your hands. And now, sir, you had better leave this cabin, else—I am in earnest, sir—you'll come to grief!" The old man now spoke very sternly.

Without a word, Somerville turned away. As he did so, he glanced at a photograph, hanging in a common gilded frame, on the side wall.

This photograph represented an elegant-looking young fellow, clad in rich attire, with a high, broad brow, clustering auburn ringlets, a heavy yellow mustache, and large blue eyes.

Somerville started violently and paused at the sight of that photograph.

"Who is that?" he asked, in a low voice, still gazing at the picture.

"That? Why, it's Tom Worth," said Old Ben, "taken five years ago, when he had money, though he was none the more honest then than now, when he is rough and dirty."

Without another word, Somerville left the house and strode away at a rapid pace.

"Hell and furies!" he muttered. "I've seen his face before! Now, he must shoulder the blame! I will crush him, else—"

The rest of this sentence was lost, as he hurried away down the hill. On his way he passed a tall, athletic man, striding rapidly up; but Somerville paid no heed to him. In five minutes afterward this same tall man entered the cabin on the mountain.

"Thank God, Tom, that you are here at last!" said old Ben, the miner, as the door closed.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 15.)

The Ace of Spades: OR, IOLA, THE STREET SWEEPER.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FAWN BECOMES A TIGRESS.

We will now return to Iola, whom we have lost sight of for some time.

When the coach drove off so suddenly—after she had entered, without waiting for Mrs. Higgins or the detective to get in—Iola suspected in an instant that she had been the victim of a plot. The street life that the girl had been forced to lead, had made her wise beyond her years. She sprang to her feet to throw herself from the carriage, despite the speed at which it was going, for Iola knew not what fear was in regard to personal danger. But a strong hand seized and forced her back on the seat; at the same time the other hand closed the door.

Iola's heart sunk within her; she felt that she was in peril.

"So, I've got you, my beauty!" cried a hoarse voice, that Iola knew only too well. The voice told her, as she had suspected from the first moment that she had guessed the trap into which she had fallen, that she was in the power of the tyrant from whom she had fled, English Bill.

"You're caged nice now, ain't you?" cried Bill, in triumph, finding that she did not reply.

The old weary look of pain came back over the girl's face, but she did not answer. "Dressed up mighty fine, ain't yer?" continued the ruffian. "I s'pose you're ashamed of your poor old father now, wot brought you up an' looked arter you?" Bill tried to be pathetic, but the attempt was but a sorry failure.

"Wot did you want to try to jump from the coach for? Don't you know you'd break those pretty bones an' spoil that face that 'Dan, the Devil,' is so sweet arter?"

The poor girl shuddered at her protector's name. Now that she was lost to him, she fully realized how dear he was to her.

"Why don't you answer me, you young devil?" cried Bill, savagely. The tone suited him much better than the pathetic one.

"Where did you get this dress and stuff? Did Catterton give 'em to you, say?" Still the girl made no answer, but sat quiet, held by the ruffian's strong hand, and looked at him with eyes full of angry fire. If eyes had the power to kill, as in the fable, then Iola's orbs would have stricken death to English Bill.

"Why don't you answer me, say?" and the ruffian raised his heavy hand as if to strike her.

"Don't on strike me, Bill!" cried Iola, in a deep, intense voice between her firm set teeth, while her great eyes flashed lurid fires.

Bill's uplifted hand dropped in amazement. He had never seen the girl, whom he had beaten—and unmercifully, too—ever since she was a baby, display the slightest bit of temper, much less resist his brutality.

"What the blazes do you mean?" cried he, in utter amazement.

"I mean what I say; don't you dare to strike me!" replied the girl, her face white with passion.

"Well, I'm blessed!" exclaimed Bill. He did not exactly understand the meaning of this. "Seg here, who told you to run away from me, you young whelp, you?"

"I will not tell you!" replied Iola, firmly.

"Well, I guess I know. It's that blasted 'Dan, the Devil,' the 'Marquis.' I'll 'marquis' him when I get hold on him!" cried Bill, savagely.

"And he'll 'marquis' you, if he ever meets you, for this!" cried Iola, in defiance. "I held his arm that night on Broadway or you would have suffered."

"What!" almost yelled Bill, maddened by the taunt; "do you dare to threaten me with your lover?"

"He is not my lover!" exclaimed Iola, the hot blood pouring into her cheeks. "He is a gentleman, while I am only a poor girl."

"Oh, he ain't your lover, then?" sneered Bill. "He dresses you up in these fine clothes all for nothing, I s'pose; he's a charitable cuss, he is; I s'pose he belongs to the animal society."

Bill evidently referred to Mr. Bergh's excellent idea.

"No; again I say he is not my lover. He has never said one word to me in his life that he couldn't have spoken before all the people in New York. He pitied me, like the gentleman that he is."

"Oh, he's a whole wagon-load of Fifth Avenue nob, he is! He's an out-an'-outer! Ain't it a pity that you won't see him, not no more?" said Bill, in a slightly sarcastic manner.

"How do you know that I won't see him?" demanded the girl.

Bill could not understand the spirit that his formerly submissive slave was displaying.

"How do I know?" he repeated, in amazement. "Why, ain't it plain enough? Ain't I got my hands on you, an' do you s'pose I'm fool enough to let you go ag'in, say?"

"And do you think that you can keep me, now that I know what liberty is and how sweet it is to be free?" she asked, in a tone that plainly showed that Iola, the working girl, was indeed greatly changed from Iola, the street sweeper.

"Well, I'm goin' to try, my beauty," replied the ruffian. "Things are in a nice fix, I should say, when a feller's own gal runs away from him. Hain't you got any love or respect for your father, say?" and Bill tried to look dignified.

"You, my father!" cried Iola, in contempt.

"Yes; who says I ain't?" demanded Bill, quickly and in great alarm. "Has anybody put it into your head to go back on your father?"

Iola could not understand the meaning of Bill's alarm at her simple words.

"Have you ever treated me like a father?" she asked, in indignation. "You have beat and ill-used me ever since I can remember. Is that the way to make me love you or to think of you as a father?"

"Oh!" cried Bill, evidently greatly relieved by the explanation, "that's what you mean, is it?"

"What else should I mean?" asked Iola, in astonishment.

"Oh, nothing; I only thought— Well, it's no matter." Bill was evidently confused by the question.

"You have succeeded in entrapping me into your hands, but you will never keep me living; if you kill me, you may. But, so surely as I live, so surely will I escape from you." There was no hesitation in the girl's voice. Iola had, indeed, changed greatly.

"Well, do you know what I'll do, if you run away from me ag'in?" demanded Bill, after a moment's thought.

Iola did not answer.

"I'll just go to the police an' have 'em make you come back. You're my gal, an' you ain't of age yet, an' I've got a father's rights, I'll have you to know!" exclaimed Bill, triumphantly.

"Why didn't you go to the police this time instead of kidnapping me in this way?" asked the girl.

Bill was staggered by the question. To tell the truth, he had very good reasons for not wishing to appear before a police magistrate. The ruffian knew very well that quite a number of unpleasant questions would probably be put to him, the answers to which, if given by him correctly, would be pretty certain to transfer him from the witness-box to the criminal dock to answer some ugly charges; with the State prison at Sing Sing in strong perspective.

"Well, I didn't want to mix you up in any fuss," said Bill, in confusion; "but I'll do it next time, see it I don't!" The ruffian was trying with blustering to frighten the girl.

"But, my beauty," he continued, "you won't get out of my hands so easy ag'in, an' if I catch you attempting it, why I'll beat the life out of you!" Bill was ferocious!

"No, you will not!" cried Iola, a wicked look on the pale face.

"Why won't I?" asked Bill, mystified by this display of spirit.

"Because, if you lay a single finger on me in the way of violence, I will kill you as sure as there is a God in Heaven!"

Bill, ruffian, bully as he was, was awed by the tone of the young girl, which was terribly in earnest.

"Wot do you mean?" Bill growled.

"Exactly what I say. I am a child no longer; I have tasted freedom, and never again will be a slave. You have hunted me down, taken me from the only one in this world who has ever bestowed a kind word or look upon me; you are dragging me back to misery and despair, and I am desperate. I do not care what I do, since I am separated from Daniel Catterton, and you are the one that has torn me from him. Therefore, if you lay a finger on me, kill me outright or I'll make you repent it to the longest day of your life." Iola's passion was at a white heat. As she had said, she was desperate. All the flame in her nature, dormant through long years of suffering, had now suddenly sprung into being.

Bill almost shivered at her manner, more than at her words.

"Curse her!" he muttered to himself, between his teeth; "I believe the little devil would just as lief stick a knife into me as not. Maybe, though, I'll find a way to take the mischief out of her."

"Are you taking me back to that den in Water street?" demanded the girl, suddenly.

"No, I ain't," responded the ruffian. "Do you s'pose I'm a flat? I'm goin' to carry you to a place where that blasted 'Marquis' can't find you if he had all the detectives in New York at his back. A place where you'll be perfectly safe." And Bill indulged in a ferocious grin.

"Don't you be too sure of that," returned Iola, spiritedly. "You can't keep me unless you kill me!"

"Well, then, I'll do it," exclaimed the ruffian, savagely. "I'd rather kill you than let that infernal 'Dan, the Devil,' have you. If you escape from me, it'll only be by goin' into your grave, an' I guess a young, pretty gal like you ain't in a hurry to die yet, are you?"

"I would sooner die than live the wretched life I have been leading over again!" returned Iola.

"Oh, you won't die," said the ruffian; "I'm goin' to make a few thousand dollars out of you afore I git through with you. If I hadn't a chance to make something out of you, I wouldn't care what become of you, 'cept I wouldn't let that 'Marquis' have you, curse him!"

"What do you mean?" asked the girl.

"Ask me no questions, an' I'll tell you no lies," replied the ruffian, with a grin. "I knows, an' that's enough."

Iola did not answer; she could not guess a meaning to the mysterious words of English Bill, and finally concluded that it was but the bravado of the ruffian.

The hack still continued on its course. They had already come a considerable distance. Iola guessed—and rightly—that they were going to the upper part of the city. She knew that English Bill was well acquainted with ruffians of every grade. It was probably to the house of some one of these ruffians that she was being conveyed.

The girl, however, did not despair. She had faith that she would escape from the power of the villain who sat before and glowered at her with angry eyes.

She had faith that Heaven would aid her, and in that Heaven she placed her trust.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CURLY ROCKS "INTERVIEWS" MR. A. B.

ON the morning of the night on which Iola was abducted by English Bill, a mysteriously-worded advertisement appeared in the "Personal" column of the *New York Herald*. The advertisement read as follows:

"WANTED.—Information concerning female infant lost on the night of September 20th, 1832, on Thirtieth street near Fifth avenue, on or about the hour of eleven P. M. The infant had a peculiar mark on the left shoulder. Any information will be liberally rewarded, and no questions asked. Apply to A. B., room No. 4, No. 436 Broadway."

As the reader will observe, this was indeed a most mysteriously worded advertisement.

Simultaneously with the appearance of the advertisement in the *Herald*, a small handbill containing the same notice was distributed freely in all the low saloons, where people of bad character—hard cases known to the police—men and women whose portraits adorned the Rogue's Gallery—were known to congregate. So that, by ten A. M., on the day that the notice had been so thoroughly brought to the eyes of a certain class, it was pretty well known to that class that information was wanted, which some one of their number could probably give.

Among others, Curly Rocks read the handbill; then, after pondering over it for a short time, he carried it to a certain person—who at present shall be nameless—and asked his opinion on the matter. A short consultation was held, and the end of which was, that Curly Rocks started for No. 436 Broadway, to "interview" Mr. A. B., as he jocosely said.

Curly arrived at No. 436, but he did not immediately enter the building. Curly was too sharp for that. Being given to trickery himself, he suspected it in others. So he



walked slowly by and examined the "lay of the land," as a sailor would remark.

Curly saw nothing, however, to excite his suspicions. No. 496 was a small, two-story brick house, with a book-store on the ground floor, a shoemaker's shop in the basement, and offices on the second story above; entrance to which was had by a small stairway by the side of the book-store.

"Well, so far all is lovely and serene," said Curly to himself, as he sauntered past the house. "The crib is all O. K. I don't see any perils a-hangin' round, neither, nor any detectives. It can't be a 'plant'—how can they tell whose a-goin' to answer the notice? I think I'll risk it. I ain't done nothin' lately; 'sides, 'lection's comin' on soon, an' votes are scarce."

The redoubtable Curly turned and walked slowly back again.

The rough did not feel fully satisfied, and kept a sharp look-out to detect some signs of a trap, if trap there was.

This time Curly paused at the door of No. 496.

"It's all right," he said; "there ain't anybody got their eyes on me."

But it was not all right, for somebody had got their eyes on him. On the other side of Broadway, in a second story window, concealed from view by a blind, stood a powerfully-built, yet active-looking man, about six feet high, with a nose curved like an eagle's beak, and with an eye as sharp as a hawk's. This man, aided by a powerful opera-glass, was surveying Curly Rocks very carefully at the very moment that that worthy was congratulating himself that he was unobserved.

After another cautious look up and down the street, Curly walked through the little entry-way and commenced to ascend the stairs.

"Curly Rocks!" said the stranger with the opera-glass in the window opposite, with a decided air of satisfaction. "That's the bite No. 1. He was suspicious, too, of a trap; that was evident from his looks up and down the street. Something's up, then, or he wouldn't be frightened. This opera-glass is a big idea. If I'd been in the street he would have spotted me, sure. This gentleman's got a cool head, but I wonder what on earth he's raking up this old affair for? I s'pose the infant's an heir, or something of that sort. I wonder if Rocks knows any thing about it? Well, I'll find out soon."

Then the man with the hawk eye and curved nose turned his attention and his opera-glass to the upper window in the second story of No. 496. The window being open, by the aid of the glass he was able to see the interior of the room and its occupants—at present there was but one—very clearly.

Having a curiosity to know who this man is, who thus with an opera-glass watches his neighbors, we will look at the small tin sign affixed to the door of the room of which he is in possession. The sign reads:

"ALLEN & CRANSTON,
PRIVATE DETECTIVES."

The private detective is an "institution" in New York. He deals with all business which, though criminal in its nature, the parties interested do not wish to have made public.

Thus, if the officers of a bank suspect that one of their employees is robbing the bank—the employee's father, perhaps, an officer of said bank—the private detective is put upon his track. The man's guilt is proved—he refunds what he has left out of the stolen funds, the father makes up the remainder—the officer "resigns," and the "unpleasant" affair is never made public.

Or, a husband suspects his wife. The private detective is called in, proof of criminality is secured—the wife "consents" to a divorce—"incompatibility of temper"—the affair is "hushed up," and the world is none the wiser.

This is not fiction, but truth that we have written. There is a vast amount of crime committed in our great cities that is discovered, the criminal caught, but the details never see the light of day in the columns of the daily newspaper. Why? Because the cases are "hushed up" by the "private detectives," and the friends and social standing of the criminal save him from the punishment that he so richly deserves.

But we will return to the rough, Curly. He, ascending the stairs and reaching the landing, saw that the front room to the left was No. 4.

Curly knocked at the door.

A deep voice bade him "come in," and the rough opened the door.

The room that the rough entered was not a large apartment, and the furniture was extremely scanty, consisting only of a table and two chairs. The windows which looked out on Broadway were open and curtainless. It was evident, even to the obtuse mind of Curly, that the occupation of the apartment was to be but temporary.

Seated at the table, with a note-book and pencil before him, sat a gentleman, probably a little over forty years of age. He was evidently a tall, well-built man. His eyes and hair were black. His face smoothly shaven and quite pale. The heavy lines around the eyes and mouth told of care and suffering. He was dressed entirely in black.

As Curly entered, the man in black cast

a searching glance upon him. The rough felt uneasy at the steady gaze of the piercing black eyes.

"Are you Mr. A. B.?" stammered Curly.

"Yes, sir," answered the gentleman.

"Take a chair, sir."

Curly sat down and threw a covert glance around the room to make sure that there wasn't any other besides himself and the stranger there. But the rough saw nothing but the four bare walls. No door, save the one by which he had entered. No windows, save the two that looked out on Broadway. Curly was satisfied that there could be no eavesdropper. A mouse would have found it difficult to discover a hiding-place, much less a man.

The man in black instantly comprehended the meaning of the glance.

"Do not fear, sir," he said, in a deep, powerful voice; "we are entirely alone. No one can overhear us. If you have come in relation to my advertisement for a lost child, our interview will be strictly confidential."

"Oh, I ain't afraid, Cap!" said Curly, with a slight assumption of bluster.

"You have come, then, in relation to my advertisement?"

"Well, yes, I s'pose I have," responded Curly, dubiously.

"What do you know in regard to the matter?" asked Mr. A. B., as he had styled himself.

"Well, now, that's what a lawyer would call a leading question," said Curly, with a grin. Curly was "posted" on legal matters, having had considerable experience in the law courts, as he had figured as the center ornament in sundry trials before Justice Dowling, for assault and battery.

"Of course you put a certain price upon your knowledge?"

"In course I do, judge," replied Curly.

"I don't tell all I know for nothin', now, you bet."

"That is reasonable," said the gentleman.

"Now, in the first place, before I can make you an offer for your information, I must know a little something of the extent of that information."

"That's so, Cap."

"You know that there was an infant lost in Thirtieth street on the night of September 20th, 1892?"

"Yes, I heard so," said the cautious Curly, who had no idea of committing himself.

"And that infant was a girl," continued the stranger.

"Jes' so! An' that gal was a female," said Curly, with a grin at his own wit.

"Can you produce that girl?" asked the stranger, suddenly.

"Well—" the question—metaphorically speaking—completely upset Curly. For a moment he looked at the gentleman in black with open mouth. Then, recovering a little from the suddenness of the question, for which he had no answer ready, he stammered: "Well—no, I can't."

"Do you know if the child is still living?"

A second question that bothered Curly.

"Well, I can't say that I do."

"It seems to me, then," said the man in black, with a quiet smile, "that you really know very little of this affair, and therefore that your information can not be very valuable."

"Hold on!" cried Curly, suddenly. "What are you willing to pay for information?"

"A fair price, according to the extent of that information."

"I'm your man, then?" cried Curly.

"But you seem to know nothing about the affair," said the gentleman.

"Oh, don't I, though?" said Curly, significantly. "I don't tell all I know to no one."

"Then you do know something about this affair?"

"I s'pose you knows all 'bout it."

The stranger nodded assent.

"You see, a friend of mine told me all 'bout it," said Curly, with a wink. The stranger again nodded, as much as to say that he understood the "friend" fiction.

"September 20th, 1892, was a nasty, rainy night."

"Yes."

"A feller was comin' along Thirtieth street, when he got a well on the head with a slung-shot, which laid him out like a dried herring. Then the two coves—there was two on 'em—went through him—got his valuables, a lot of letters tied together, an' a baby 'bout a year old, with a reg'lar Ace of Spades marked on the left shoulder."

"Quite correct," said Mr. A. B.

CHAPTER XXV.

"A MAN THAT KNOWS ANOTHER MAN, ETC."

CURLY leaned back in his chair and looked at the man in black in triumph.

"You have told the occurrences of that night quite correctly, but the principal thing that I wish to discover you appear to be totally ignorant of. And that is, the fate of the child. I wish to know what became of her; if she is living now, and if so, where?"

"I say, Cap!" cried Curly, suddenly, "is the gal an heir?"

"No, sir," answered the stranger, coldly.

"Oh!" and the face of the rough grew blank at the answer.

The shrewd eyes of the stranger saw the disappointment written so plainly on the features of the redoubtable Curly.

"It makes no difference to me whether

the girl is alive or dead. I am willing to pay simply to learn the truth, and I would not give one single dollar more to have the child produced now before me than to know that she had died years ago," said the stranger, in a cold, quiet tone, without the least sign of emotion.

Curly Rocks was puzzled. He had imagined that he was on the track of a secret that would be worth a small fortune to him, and now, with a few words, this mysterious Mr. A. B. had brought the "Chateau Espagne" to the ground in one grand ruin.

"I don't understand this," muttered the discomfited rough.

"It is not necessary that you should," coolly replied the other. "If you have information to sell in regard to this matter, I am willing to pay for it. If you know nothing of the matter, our interview is ended."

"Well," said Curly, slowly, "I don't know any thing 'bout the gal, but I knows a man who knows another man wot does."

"Where is this man to be found—who does know about the girl?"

"I can find him for you, if you'll pay for it."

"Why should I pay you, when he will, in all probability, see my advertisement and come himself?" said Mr. A. B., in the same cool, matter-of-fact tone that he had used during the whole interview.

"Cos he won't come; I'm his agent," said Curly, in quite a dignified manner.

"Ah! now we're beginning to understand one another. Why didn't you say this before?" asked Mr. A. B.

"Well, I kinder wanted to feel my way; that's all," replied the rough.

"And now, having felt your way, suppose you proceed to business."

"All right," said Curly.

"And in the first place, can this man that you speak of give me all the particulars in regard to the child?"

"You bet he can!" replied the rough.

"How did he learn them?" asked the man in black, fixing his eyes searchingly upon the face of the rough.

"Why, 'cos the cove I speak of was the one that hit the man in Thirtieth street over the head with the slung-shot, and took the baby; and in course he knows all about it, if anybody does."

"Yes, I should think that it was likely," and a quiet smile passed over the face of the man in black. "Where is this gentleman to be found?"

"Well, that depends on who wants to find him, an' wot they want him for. You see, he's quite a jewel of a man, an' sometimes his society is so much hankered arter that he's obligated to retire from public life almost altogether," and Curly could not repress a grin at his description of the character of his friend.

"Of course you know where to find this 'ornament to society,'" said the man in black, in a slightly sarcastic tone.

"Yes, I guess I can hunt him up."

Curly spoke quite confidently; and considering that he had just come from a consultation with the man he was referring to, he had reason for his confidence.

"Will you name a place where I can see this man?" asked Mr. A. B.

"Well, I s'pose it will be as well for him to come here as to go anywhere else," replied the rough.

"That is satisfactory to me. When can this person call upon me?"

"Whenever you like, Cap."

"Say to-morrow at this time."

"That's O. K.," replied Curly.

"Very well; I shall expect you then."

"We'll be on hand," said the rough, rising.

"You want to know if the gal is living or dead?"

"Yes."

"An' if the gal is living, do you want her?"

"No," replied the man in black, coldly.

"Then it don't make a bit of difference whether she is dead or alive?" asked the astonished Curly.

"Not a bit," replied Mr. A. B.

"Well, this is a queer go!" cried the ruffian, in amazement.

"Not at all. All I wish—as I said before—is to satisfy my mind as to her fate; whether she is alive or dead."

"My pardner will tell you all 'bout it," said Curly.

"To-morrow then at this hour."

"Jes' so." And Mr. Curly Rocks took his departure. As he descended the stairs the thought occurred to him that he had not effected much in "interviewing" Mr. A. B. It was plainly evident that the mysterious gentleman preferred to deal with principals alone and not with agents.

"The old man will 'strike' him anyway," said Curly, to himself, as he sauntered down Broadway.

After Curly Rocks had departed, the mysterious advertiser who had styled himself Mr. A. B., and who was anxious to ascertain the fate of an infant with the Ace of Spades on her shoulder, took his handkerchief from his pocket and held it up in the air. This was evidently a signal to the hawk-eyed stranger, with the opera-glass, watching in the window on the opposite side of Broadway. He instantly laid down his glass, took his hat, and locking the door of the office after him—for the hawk-eyed man was the private detective, Richard Cranston, in person—he descended the stairs to the street.

The detective crossed Broadway and ascending the stairs of No. 496 entered the apartment occupied by Mr. A. B.

"You saw the fellow?" asked Mr. A. B., evidently referring to the rough, who had just departed.

"Yes."

"Did you recognize him?"

"Yes: Curly Rocks, one of the hardest cases that I know of. Did you discover any thing from him?"

"No; after a few questions he owned that he came merely as the agent of another party."

"And that party?"

"I am to see to-morrow at the same time this fellow came this morning," replied the man in black.

"Do you think that you can get the information out of him that you desire?"

"I think so," the other replied.

"But did you discover from this Curly Rocks any facts that would lead you to suppose that the other rough that he represents, knows the particulars that you wish to learn?" asked the detective.

"Yes," the other replied; "you are aware that I wish to know the fate of an infant, taken from the arms of a man who was attacked and knocked down with a slung-shot on Thirtieth street about sixteen years ago?"

"Yes," said the detective.

"This Rocks related the particulars of the assault, and also described a peculiar mark that the infant bore upon its left shoulder. This, mind you, without my giving him any clue whatever. So it is evident that he must be well acquainted with the affair."

"Yes, that's true," returned the detective, "but do you think you can come to terms with these fellows?"

"That I do not know," replied Mr. A. B.

"But I think I can."

"If they suspect that there is any money in it they'll be apt to put the screws on, and if the girl is in their hands you won't get her without paying a big price."

A quiet smile passed over the pale face of Mr. A. B. at the speech of the detective.

"I see, Mr. Cranston," he said, "that you have fallen into the same error that this rough did. You imagine, I suppose, that I wish this girl for some special purpose—that she is, perhaps, the heir to some estate?"

"Well, I haven't given the matter much thought," replied Cranston, a little puzzled at the words of the other. "When you applied to our firm about this business you merely said that you wished to find a child that was lost in this city sixteen years ago; and that, if it was possible, you would like to come personally in contact with the party or parties that had possession of the child. I at once suggested the advertisement in the *Herald*, and the handbills for the low slums. Besides, for you to receive the persons who should answer the advertisement in this room, which being right across the way from our office, we could easily by means of a glass watch the callers. So if you couldn't come to terms with them, and found that they were really in possession of the information that you desired, why we could 'spot 'em and run 'em to earth if they wasn't reasonable. Of course, I had a sort of idea that you wouldn't be so anxious about this child, if there wasn't some strong reason in the background. Either that the infant was some relation of your own, or else she was the heir to an estate, to gain which, she must be produced. That's just what I thought about the matter."

"You are utterly wrong in your conclusions, Mr. Cranston," said the other. "The child is not related to me in any way whatsoever, nor is she the heir to an estate. The child I seek is the child of sin, the offspring of shame; and I frankly own that it would give me greater pleasure to learn that she is dead than to know that she is living."

The voice of this strange, pale man with the piercing black eyes, was hard, cold, mechanical, as he uttered this odd speech. The detective looked at him in astonishment.

"Well, I must say that this is about the strangest affair that I have ever met with!" cried the detective in amazement. "Then you don't really care whether the child is alive or dead?"

"No," coldly answered the other.

"In that case then you'll probably have very little difficulty in getting the truth out of these fellows, if they can make nothing by keeping it back," said Cranston.

"That is my thought exactly."

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 9.)

THE THREE GRACES!

In Art, the three Graces are typified as the True the Beautiful, the Good, and artists delight to paint them as three sisters closely linked in a loving embrace.

In Journalism the three Graces are something more substantial, having those elements of the real, the practical about them which renders the journal at once good for the eyes, the ears and the mind.

These three Graces the reader will find associated with each and every issue of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, viz:

Beauty and Clearness of Type

Excellence and Interest of Matter,

Exceeding Cheapness of Price.

Aiming to produce a paper that old and young alike can read with pleasure and profit, we shall freely use our unrivaled facilities to present the lovers of popular literature with

THE MODEL PAPER OF AMERICA!

Hints and Helps.

Plants in the House.—Almost every good wife who loves plants and flowers will have a few pots of them in the sitting-room; a few Hyacinths, a German Ivy, a Rose or two, Verbenas, Petunias and the like. Now this is very well; we like to see it. We always think more highly of the members of that house where we find plants, and those well cared for. A few hints as to the management of such plants, we presume, will not be considered out of place. The chief requisites for the well-being of such plants are sun, heat and water. A window on the southerly side of the house is the very best place to keep them, where they can get a few hours' sun. Then the room where the plants are should be kept as warm as 68 or 70 degrees, and should be liberally supplied with water, especially those that are coming into, and while in bloom. The water supplied should be about milk warm. Once in every two or three weeks the plants should be washed all over to remove the dust that accumulates on the leaves. In order to do this to advantage, place them in a sink, or some such position, where a water-pot with a fine nose will sprinkle them all over; or use a large syringe, which will be even better than the water-pot. If the plants are infested with vermin, as verbenas, and many other plants are likely to be, then smoke them with tobacco. In other houses where the owner smokes—and we hope they are few—the plants will generally remain free from such nuisances. The plants can be placed in a box or barrel, and a small vessel with tobacco-leaves or stems put in and lighted, when the box should be covered up for a brief period, say two or three minutes, if there is a great smoke; a longer time if but little. This operation will probably have to be repeated once in a month or so. Some take their plants and syringe them with soap-suds to destroy the lice. Care must be used with this method, as with the other, or harm will be done the plants. To make the plants grow vigorously, put a little Peruvian guano into the water, say two or three table-spoonfuls to a gallon, or use water that has been run through stable manure. Some people take a barrel, or half-barrel, and put it into the cellar and fill it with horse manure; and when they want some manure-water they pour it into the barrel, and get a very excellent article with which to water their plants. This may be done every week or two through the winter. Plants should not be put into large pots, for if so treated they will make plenty of growth, but give few flowers. If they are inclined to grow ragged and straggling, pinch in the branches so inclined, and so keep the plant compact and symmetrical. Stir up the earth in the pot occasionally on the surface, that it will the more readily absorb heat and moisture. Plants treated as we have described ought to give plenty of healthy foliage, and beautiful flowers.

Sleep! Sleep!—Don't fail to sleep eight out of every twenty-four hours, nor be intimidated by some growler who thinks all time spent in bed is lost time. Such a person is a great fool, whether he realize it or not, and he gets his pay by shortening his own years. Sleep is "tired Nature's Sweet Restorer," it is the only mode of recuperating mind and body, and is as much to be cultivated as any other virtue.

Every person should sleep according to his temperament. Eight hours is the average. If one requires a little more or a little less, he will find it out for himself. Whoever by work, pleasure, sorrow, or by any other cause, is regularly diminishing his sleep, is destroying his life. A man may hold out for a time. But Nature keeps close accounts, and no man can dodge her settlements. Fancy an impoverished railroad that can not keep the line in order, nor spare the engines to be thoroughly repaired. Every year, line and equipments deteriorate. By and by comes a crash, and the road is in a heap of confusion and destruction. So it is with men. They can not spare time to sleep enough. They slowly run behind. Symptoms of general waste appear. Premature wrinkles, weak eyes, depression of spirits, failure of digestion, feebleness in the morning, and overwhelming melancholy—these and other signs show a general disipation. If now, sudden calamity causes an extraordinary pressure, they go down under it. They have no resources to draw upon. They have been living up to the verge of their whole vitality every day. There is a great deal of intemperance besides that of tobacco, opium, or brandy. Men are dissipated, to overtax their system all day and under-sleep every night. Some men are dissipated by physical stimulants, and some by social, and some by professional and commercial. But a man who dies of *diphtheria tremens* is no more a drunkard and a suicide than the lawyer, the clergyman, the auctioneer, or the merchant that works excessively all day, and sleeps but little all night.

A Conquering Wash.—A friend who had been "down the coast" for recreation comes back with his face all blotched, and reports that he has not had a good night's rest for two weeks in consequence of the musketoes. His trip, in fact, was one of torment to him in consequence of these horrid pests. There is a cure, however, for the affliction. Anoint the exposed skin with a mixture composed of four ounces glycerine, two and a-half drachms oil of peppermint, four drachms of turpentine, and the tantalizing monsters will not molest your repose—a simple cure for a compound evil.

A Practical Suggestion.—Many a man has started from a shoe-store feeling that he has had a "nice fit," who, by the time he has walked two hundred yards, has wished vehemently that both boot and maker were at the very bottom of the sea. To obviate this difficulty, before trying on the boots, put on two pairs of thick winter or summer stockings, and any boot which can be drawn on with any reasonable effort will be comfortably loose when put on over one pair. The reader need not try this once and feel satisfied of the practical value of the suggestion.

How to get Rich.—Let a young man at twenty years of age put twenty dollars at interest, instead of expending it for tobacco. Then, at the beginning of the next year repeat it, and include also the principal and interest of the preceding year, and thus continue to do from year to year, until he shall have reached the age of seventy; the amount he would realize would exceed thirty thousand dollars!

Ah! ambitious heart, there is a time when the world's admiration will fail you. No matter how great the honors heaped upon you; no matter how green the laurels upon your brow, twisted and placed there by the great of this world; no matter to what heights of fame you have attained, you will find them insufficient for your happiness.

The time will come when fame and honor, and worldly greatness would be gladly exchanged for one little word of love from some pure, loving heart.

And Fred sat, surrounded by all the luxuries that wealth could procure, and realized all this, and thought sadly of his broken dream.

As he sat, the door opened, and a servant handed him a note. "Dear Mr. Courtland," it ran, "will you break over your old bachelor rules, and please an old friend, by making one at her reception this evening, and oblige, hastily yours, Mrs. ELIA HUNTER."

He set holding the note in his fingers. "I have a good notion to go this once," he said. "Yes, I will," and he set down and hastily dashed off a note of acceptance to his friend.

He had just got through, when a head was put in at the door, and a voice called out: "May I come in, old fellow, or are you busy?"

"No, come in, Charley."

"You famous men are a terror to a lazy fellow like me. I never dare come until I am sure of my ground."

The speaker was our old friend, Charley Austin, of ten years ago. He looked scarcely a day older than when we saw him last; and his blue eyes laughed and sparkled as he took a seat near his friend.

"Oh, I am not at all dangerous," laughed Fred, "and I am always glad to see you. But something seems to please you wonderfully; what is it?"

"Oh, nothing. By the way, are you going to Mrs. Hunter's reception this evening?"

"I have just received a note from her, and I believe I will. I am tired of this place."

"If you go, Fred, take care of your heart, put on your irresistible and all that, or you are a gone boy. If Mrs. Hunter's ward looks at you once, you may as well give up the ship."

"Why, are you one of the list of 'killed and wounded'?"

"Don't laugh at me, Fred," said Charley, seriously. "I am dead in love with her, and she cares about as much for me as she does for her peaches; confound the imp!" and Charley ground his teeth wrathfully.

"I am very sorry, my boy, but I am heart-proof you know. Have a cigar, Charley," and the young man sauntered on the balcony to smoke.

Evening found him at Mrs. Hunter's door. Entering the parlors he made his way to her side. Smiling brightly, she said, playfully tapping him on the shoulder with her fan: "You are late, Mr. Courtland. I had nearly given you up. Why did you not come sooner?"

"A friend called in and we sat smoking until a few moments ago. Isn't he here?"

"If you will name him I will tell you. You are absent-minded this evening."

"Excuse me, I thought I had named him. I was referring to Charley Austin."

"Oh, yes, he is out on the piazza with some friends."

Fred stood by his hostess' side a few moments, looking around the room, trying to single out from among the faces around him a familiar one. His long absence had made him a stranger in his own native town.

Beautiful faces met his eyes on every side, and bright eyes flashed coquettish glances upon the famous young artist. A little apart from the rest of the company, the center of a circle of friends, his eye caught a glimpse of a lady, perfectly bewildering in her stately beauty.

Her tall, graceful form, brilliant black eyes flashing with the excitement of a spirited argument she was sustaining with one of the gentlemen; the long, drooping silken lashes and the jetty bands of hair upon her snowy brow; the crimson cheeks and ruby lips perfect in their contour; the mouth sweet in its womanly tenderness; all combined to make the artist's heart beat quickly as he gazed upon her.

He had dreamed of a face and form like this woman, and his fancy had pictured her as his ideal of perfect womanhood; now here was the real living personification of his wildest imagination.

The folds of rich black lace, festooned with golden wheat-heads, set off her dark, rich beauty, and the jewels on neck and arms flashed and sparkled at every movement of their beautiful owner, and gleamed among the jetty hair, at every turn of the stately head, like stars in a summer sky.

His friend coming up at that moment, he said: "Charley, who is that lady in black lace?"

"There! I told you so! You may as well give up at once. That is Mrs. Hunter's ward, Miss Montville."

"Present me," and the young man moved away, not noticing the arch smile with which Mrs. Hunter regarded them.

Miss Montville acknowledged Fred's presentation with a bright smile, and offered her hand.

"I have heard Mrs. Hunter speak of you so often you are hardly a stranger, Mr. Courtland. I am glad to know you."

Fred bowed his thanks, and the circle around them gradually melted away, leaving them alone.

The evening passed away on golden wings for poor, smitten Fred, and whispers were going the rounds of the room that Miss Montville had captivated the famous young artist.

Poor Charley was disconsolate, but was determined to know the worst; so the next evening he called and asked for Miss Montville's attendance in the parlor, when, in impassioned words, he made known his love for her.

"I am sorry, Mr. Austin," she said, "but you surely would not want to marry a beggar, a man of your wealth and position in society."

"A beggar! I do not understand you," and he sprang to his feet in amazement.

"Do you not remember, ten years ago, of seeing a little flower-girl at the Central depot, whom you honored by that very becoming appellation? I am that little girl, Mr. Austin, and after this you do not want me. Good-evening, Mr. Austin," and she rose and left the room.

Charley left the room and the house a wiser, and, we hope, a better man for all time to come.

Fred wondered very much what took his friend away to Europe so suddenly, but never could find the reason, and finally gave up trying. He went with him on board the

steamer, gave him a warm good-by, and returned to his studio, working harder than ever before, making his fame brighter at every stroke of the wonderful brush that executed such wonders in the fine arts.

Meanwhile, he was a constant visitor at Mrs. Hunter's. Lillian Montville's beauty had a charm for him, never before experienced in any other woman. Her fine, sensitive temperament, and sympathetic nature touched a chord in his heart, that throbbed and vibrated at every touch of her hand, or glance of her eye.

He learned to love her, and told her so; not in any high-flown, overburdened fashion, but in plain common-sense words that any true woman most admires, and she said:

"Now, reader, I don't believe it is any of our business what she said. I always feel awkward when I try to describe such a scene, and I have a poor way of doing so. So I am going to have every one supply his or her own experience and imagine it to be the one."

Whatever she said, it pleased Fred, and when Mrs. Hunter accidentally entered the parlor, Lillian's head was very comfortably pillowed upon his broad shoulder, and his mustache suspiciously near her ruby lip.

Lillian sprang up in confusion.

"Never mind, Lillian, love! You looked very nicely, indeed," and, stooping, she kissed the crimson cheek. "Be kind to her, Fred. She is all I have."

"You may trust me, Mrs. Hunter."

One morning, several weeks after Lillian had made her debut as Mrs. Fred Courtland, as she entered the breakfast-room, Fred looked up from the paper he was reading.

"What is the reason that you always wear violets? I have noticed ever since I knew you that you always wear them in your hair. Are they very particular favorites of yours?"

Lillian glanced around into the mirror. She had violets in her hair, violets in her dress, and violets in her hands, wet with dew and fragrant with dewy odors.

"Yes, they are favorites. Don't you like them?" she said, bending over him, and lifting the brown curls from his brow, pressed her lips upon it.

"Of course I like them! But, I wondered why you were so partial to them, and seeing you were more than usually violet this morning, thought I would ask you why you loved them so well."

"I love them because they got my husband for me, and—"

"I love them because they got my husband for me, and—"

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"I love them because they got my husband for me, and—"

quired the well-earned reputation of a coquette.

Every soul has its mate; and Ida Rossiter had met the master of her destiny; she loved. Yet, so strange is the inconsistency of woman, that, though caught and wooed by Winfield Grey, whom she so wrongfully adored, her habit of coquetry would not permit her to show him a preference.

Not that she intended losing him; and on the moonlight night when he told her his love in terms so passionate that her heart almost ached with the joy, when he pleaded the sweet rumor that was going the rounds of their engagement, she gracefully waived him off, fully intending to confess all on the morrow.

Alas for what we will do "to-morrow!" Many are the hopes that are crushed for their waiting for the morrow; the resolutions buried that "to-morrow" was to see fulfilled!

And Ida Rossiter, when the morning dawned, learned that Winfield Grey had left the shore that very morning while she was dreaming of him.

She was too proud to inquire; too proud to write; and when, hours later, she was playfully taunted with slaying another victim, and that Winfield Grey, she was too reservedly haughty to refute the aspersion, and by a cold bow, gave involuntary credence to the rumor.

All this, the one precious episode of her life, that had been crowded into one blissful fortnight two years ago, came rushing over her as she saw Winfield Grey walking quietly along, all unconscious of her near proximity to him.

"Winfield, old Winfield, can it be possible?" She reached forth both her beautiful arms, a glorious light that he could not have misunderstood, glowing in her dark eyes.

He started, raised his hat, and would have passed on.

"You are not angry with me, Mr. Grey?" Her tones were pleading, but he looked passionless as a statue.

"I have not forgotten our last interview, Miss Rossiter."

His cold, steady tones raised a fearful anguish in her heart.

"Nor I. I have been waiting ever since to tell you—to tell you how—I loved you!" The proud woman had spoken at last; and a beautiful blush overspread her face as she looked almost wistfully at him.

His own cheeks reddened, but he never moved his eyes from her face.

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despair was written on every lineament, and in the words she moaned, lurked a lifetime of grief. "Cast off!"

The early June sunshine came in a golden quiver all over the delicate pink and white velvet carpet that covered the floor of Marion Thorne's dressing-room, and while with light fingers it touched the rare statuary, the costly toilette ornaments, it lingered longest and most lovingly on the slight, graceful figure that stood before the dressing-mirror.

She was a golden-haired girl, this dainty Marion Thorne, with eyes the very shade of purple violets; shadowy, serene eyes, that seemed ever looking out into some misty, uncertain cloud-land.

Now, she was looking at herself, arrayed in a costly robe of creamy white satin, where fell cloud on cloud of shimmering lace; where gleamed pure pearls and soft white kids.

"What, Marion! surely you are not growing vain enough to try on your wedding-dress to note the effect?"

Marion laughed, as the young girl held up her hands in amazement.

"Do you consider this vanity? If you do, I must plead guilty. I wondered how I would look as a bride, so I put on the robes."

"As if you couldn't have waited for to-morrow noon. Well, I guess Mr. Grey will think you're an angel just floated down. Oh, Marion, there, you are faultless—perfect!"

Marion smiled, and turned again to the beautiful reflection.

"I think my dress is very becoming, and I am pleased, for Winfield's sake. And yet, with all the rapid preparations progressing, you can't tell the gloom that comes over my spirit at times—as if some hidden veil of wrath was about to be poured upon me."

Marion's eyes were gazing away, away off, as if seeking to wrest the secrets from her future.

Gracie Rose gave a little scream.

"Oh, you superstitious girl, you—and yet, oh, Marion, I have heard it was a bad omen to try on a complete wedding-suit. And here you are, nothing wanting, even the kids, the slippers, the veil and all."

Marion smiled, and shook her head.

"Nonsense, Gracie. Yet, to comfort you, please notice I have not on the wreath."

The young girl laughed joyously.

"Good; there's hope yet, then! Hark! there comes Mr. Grey now. Shall I send him up?"

"I love them because they got my husband for me, and—"

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"I love them because they got my husband for me, and—"

"Love him, Gracie? You never can know how much."

"Then there's no danger that you won't wear this in old Trinity to-morrow at mid-day," returned matter-of-fact Gracie.

It was a new grave, over which the flowers of but seven weeks had bloomed; at its head stood a costly marble cross, and a wreath of immortelles was twined about it.

On its snowy-white surface were carved letters that were unspeakably precious to fond hearts; and the letters read thus:

"Sacred to WINFIELD GREY, Aged 28."

On the high, sweet-scented turf knelt, in piteful abandon, a young, fair-haired girl, whose black robes swept the spot where her darling lay at rest.

She did not moan or cry, but unspoken agony was making her slender frame quiver with deepest emotion.

A little away, standing defiant and stormy, was a noble, commanding woman, her sable garments trailing to the very sides of Winfield Grey's grave.

Her hard, bright eyes were watching the fragile form that was kissing the sod so passionately, all unconscious of the presence of any one till her own name, spoken in clear, musical tones, startled her.

"Marion Thorne!"

She sprang to her feet, and gazed at the intruder.

"I spoke to you, Marion Thorne, because I have a right to do so. You loved him, but not half so much as I did—there, don't scream, for I am telling the truth. I worshipped him; he hated me. You loved him, he worshipped you. That's all the difference. You were to be his wife; I was 'cast off! cast off!' Oh, those words will ring in my ears through eternity!"

Marion sunk to the ground, covering her face with her hands, white, stern and passionless.

Ida Rossiter continued:

"The day he deserted me, that day I knew a vengeance would follow him. I knew not what it would be; but when the papers told me he was dead, had died of heart disease on the wedding morn, I felt 'twas only just. He had crushed my heart, and I had to live, just as you will live, to suffer till the end. He cared not the sacrifice I made to win him, and now, lying cold and still under the summer daisies, he knows not the fearful sacrifice you have been compelled to endure in giving him up. Truly, 'God's ways are not our ways!'"

With a reverential tenderness she bent over Winfield Grey's grave and kissed the weeping, widowed bride; then departed as she came, silently, mysteriously, leaving alone in the early twilight the stricken girl to bear alone her burden of sacrifice.

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"I can appreciate Mr. Trevlyn's discriminating taste in selecting Miss Elverton for a friend; she is a charming girl."

Helen bit her lips in vexation; her arrow had fallen harmlessly at his feet.

"Indeed she is," she continued, enthusiastically. "Maude is a sweet creature, and we are the best friends in the world. I know all her secrets, and she all mine."

"You could not have a better confidante. I know Maude never betrays what is confided to her."

Again the cold gleam in his eyes warned her he was not falling into the net she was spreading.

"I mentioned Mr. Trevlyn's name in conjunction with Maude's, because I know she thinks a great deal of him; a great deal, indeed. I should not be surprised if they were betrothed."

A sudden glow of anger he could not avoid mantled his face.

"Miss Joyce, if you think to wrench from me any demonstrations of jealousy on Miss Elverton's account, you are proceeding in the most impossible way. If Miss Elverton considers you what you very evidently regard yourself—her confidante, she is grossly deceived, and you have basely betrayed her."

Without a parting word, he walked proudly out from the room, leaving her to quench her rage as best she could.

And indeed it would be difficult to define the varied tumult of emotion that swept over her.

Rage, mortification, wounded pride and love—for with all her might she loved George Casselmaine—struggled and conflicted.

Her face grew dark and severe; her light, keen eyes darted fiery rays of malicious vexation, as she paced to and fro, awaiting the return of Maude, in whose ear she was so anxious to pour her poisonous words.

She had not long to wait, for in a few minutes after her companion's abrupt departure, the sound of the carriage-wheels on the gravel-walk announced the return of the ladies.

Mrs. Elverton alighted, and proceeded at once to her dressing-room.

Maude, seeing Helen's face between the curtains, entered the parlor.

"I hope I have not kept you waiting very long; have I?" Maude asked, as she removed her elegant camel-hair shawl, glancing a moment at Helen as she spoke.

"Only a half-hour, *chere*."

"Which must have passed lonesomely here all by yourself. I am sorry we were not home sooner."

"Mr. Casselmaine has favored me with his gentlemanly company part of the time."

Helen spoke sourly and crossly.

"Why, what is the trouble?" inquired Maude quickly, noting the rising in Helen's tones, and on her face. She knew her betrothed had, in some manner, offended her guest.

"Nothing mentionable; pray do not allow it to annoy you. I don't fancy Mr. Casselmaine very much, that's all."

Maude laughed merrily at Helen's grim visage.

"Nonsense, *amie*, George is too thoroughly a gentleman to cause any lady to dislike him. You may have misconstrued a word he said, for I am positive he never speaks indecorously to any one."

"If he were to tell you you were a base betrayer of secrets, and accuse you of loving another person better than your betrothed husband, wouldn't you take offense at it?"

She looked Maude full in the face as she uttered the treason.

Maude's cheeks flushed an angry scarlet, and her eyes suffused with tears.

"Helen, George Casselmaine did not say that!" Her voice quivered as she spoke.

"He did. He said he thought you liked Fred Trevlyn better than you did him, and that it was dishonorable in you."

"Helen, Helen, stop. Did he dare call me—Maude Elverton, dishonorable?"

Her flashing eyes searched scrutinizingly the impassive pale face, so haughty and self-assured, before her. The keen gray eyes did not falter when they met the fierce glance, nor the cheeks reddened as the lips deliberately uttered the falsehood.

Helen Joyce looked boldly at Maude.

"George Casselmaine not only accused you of being false to him, but he declared the disloyalty was mutual, as the pretty girl at Rose Cottage had won his heart."

Maude's proud head drooped to the arm of the sofa, and the hot, scalding tears fell copiously over her round white arm. No complaint did she utter, no other sign that she was insulted, outraged in her womanly faithfulness to her future husband—and grandly true she had compelled herself to be, as the reader remembers—

Helen watched her tears with ill-concealed delight.

"Let me part this; let me part him and the miserable cottage-girl, and I will reap my reward, even if a half-score years pass before I win him. I will marry George Casselmaine, come what may, and he shall fourfold repay me the bitter debt he incurred this day."

"Helen," and Maude raised her face again, her eyes tearless, her countenance devoid of all traces of her previous emotion, "I am very much indebted to you for your kindness, and I think I appreciate your friendly interest in accepting my honor as your own, for I know your anger arose entirely from hearing my name defamed."

"Indeed it did. I am not the person to

sit quietly by, and hear any one speak harshly about my friends."

Maude laid her head affectionately on Helen's shoulder.

"Dear Helen, I am so thankful you are such a true, fearless woman; so noble and high-principled in every thing you do or say. George could not have selected a more honorable confidante for his opinion."

"And the confidante has 'basely betrayed,' you see," returned Helen, playfully. "When I told Mr. Casselmaine I should certainly inform you of our interview, he accused me of being a betrayer of confidence, and what lowered him still more in my estimation, and will, I am sure, in yours, threatened to deny, *in toto*, every thing he said, in case you brought him before you; and not that alone, but he said he could turn the tables against me, so it would appear I had maligned you, and he indignantly defended you."

"Heartless!" ejaculated Maude, as Helen ceased, and stroked her hair lovingly. "Do not feel embarrassed, dear Helen, for I know, positively, you would never speak ill of me. And it is very hard to think George should, either."

Helen did not reply, nor did Maude see the almost fiendish smile on her haughty lips.

"Maude, will I be forgiven if I say something I fear I should not?"

"Say any thing you choose; you can not offend me."

Above Maude's bowed head Helen's eyes gleamed delightedly, as she thought: "But let me ascertain if Frederic Trevlyn and Maude do reciprocate each other's love, and I am on the very path I am seeking. Then baffle me who may?"

Her voice, as she began, was hesitating and half fearful.

"I must have another promise that I may whisper my unimportant opinion—or, rather, suspicion—and not offend or distress you in the least. And that, if I am wrong, you will love me none the less."

"You have the promise, sacredly given. Now speak."

"Then," said Helen, lowering her tones until they were low and liquid, "then, *chere*, I think Maude does love Fred Trevlyn."

The words were few, but a vivid blush mantled Maude's face as she raised her head.

"Why do you think so?"

"Because I know, from good authority, that the handsome master of the Archery loves George Casselmaine's betrothed to idolatry; and Maude Elverton can not, for the life of her, avoid returning that love."

She kissed her tenderly.

"Helen, promise never to tell a living soul that I do love him as I never shall love again."

A proud light gleamed in her eyes as she nobly confessed her affection.

"Rest assured of that, *chere*. And now, knowing you love each other, may I congratulate you that the barrier is removed? For, of course, your two-fold reason for releasing Mr. Casselmaine will direct you to break the engagement as early as possible."

"I must acquaint mamma and papa with this affair, and see George myself. Of course, I shall dismiss him, for, after what he has confided to you, I would not wish to become his wife, even if—"

"You really loved him," supplied Helen, as Maude hesitated. "Remember, I caution you against what he may say of me; for, in his wrath that I said I should faithfully repeat every word to you, he unwittingly said what he did. So be prepared, dear Maude, to hear me spoken of very harshly, perhaps scandalously. But I trust you know me too well to credit a word."

"Indeed, no one can influence me against you; you can always believe that I am a true friend, even as I know you are."

Helen pressed her hand affectionately.

"I shall have to go home again, for I expect Mr. Winchester to tea; and father is very particular about our punctuality."

She drew her shawl gracefully around her, and put the dainty little hat on her head; then, when she had fastened the kids, she kissed Maude, and went away.

CHAPTER XIV.

A CONTRETEMPS.

SEVERAL days had elapsed, each passing as the other to the inmates of Rose Cottage—each marked by the urgent advice of Mr. Tressel for Ida to accept Andrew Joyce—each occupied in part, at least, by a visit from the gray-haired lover, who begged and implored her sweet consent. But Ida remained indignantly firm. She stoutly persisted in refusing to converse on the disagreeable subject, and the two old gentlemen had at last laid their heads together to concoct some plan whereby their darling scheme should be accomplished.

The days had passed, and since his first and only call, Ida had watched in vain for George Casselmaine's appearance. From her white-curtained window—doubly dark that he had looked from it—she watched the shady country road, wondering why he did not come; wishing he were there, if but for a moment, and then chiding herself with suffering her thoughts to dwell so continually on him.

What did George Casselmaine care for her? He had done or said nothing more than any gentleman would when he admired a lady.

Then she remembered, with a thrill of exquisite pleasure, the earnest gaze of his fine, dark eyes; the pressure of her hand when he bade her adieu, and the solicited entreaty that they might be friends.

From him her thoughts reverted to her persistent suitor, whose voice even then reached her ear, and her whole soul went out in a rebellion against the wickedness of the desired alliance.

Buried in thought, she took no note of the passing moments, until a sharp knock at their front door awoke her from her reverie. Hetty had already ushered the caller in, and then came to call her.

"It is the gentleman, honey—the handsome gentleman who was hurt."

A wild throbbing of her glad heart told how welcome the news was to her, and, though her fingers trembled, she hastily made a few changes in her toilette, and went down-stairs.

Near the part-open door she paused to still the tumultuous beating of her heart, and collect her senses before she entered; then, firmly, yet enthusiastically, she opened the door. Casselmaine arose to meet her, and taking both hands, led her to the sofa, and then seated himself beside her.

"It has been so long since I saw you, that I ventured to call again before strict etiquette admits. But I think I am welcome?"

"Very welcome. I wish you had come sooner."

He smiled, and took her little hand, holding it caressingly in his own.

"Then I wish it heartily, too. I find my best enjoyment in your society, Ida, and many are the hours I would pass at Rose Cottage were I master of my own actions. As it is, my host and family claim, and very properly, a large portion of my time."

"Which every other gentleman envies you for, especially on Maude Elverton's account."

"They well may, for she deserves all the praise bestowed upon her. Yet—and I suppose I should not dare speak it—I do not think our marriage will be a happy one."

He spoke absently, and his eyes were far out of the window, on the beautiful expanse of meadow-land that stretched before them.

Ida shivered and started, and her cheek paled. Then to her beautiful eyes the tears dropped rushed.

He did not see her agitation, but he felt the quivering of her fingers, and he turned to her.

"It should be happy, I'm sure. Maude is all you could desire, and you—"

Her voice faltered, but pride came to her rescue. And though his eager, loving eyes were fixed on her changeable features, she managed to finish her remark.

"—You are quite a favorite with her."

He smiled again, but bitterly this time, as he listened.

"I am glad you think so highly of Miss Elverton's choice. I presume you knew an engagement existed?"

In his own soul he felt the cruelty of the question, and yet he desired to ascertain if she cared for him.

Ida heard his question, and more calmly than she afterward thought possible.

"I did not, Mr. Casselmaine. How should I?"

Her gaze was directed from him, and her fingers restlessly pulled a twig of clematis to pieces.

"I thought you were acquainted with Miss Elverton; she would have made it no secret."

Ida's cheek flushed as she replied:

"I am very slightly acquainted with Miss Maude, but you know she is an heiress, and I a penniless country girl. Confidences between such antipodes would be impossible."

She spoke coldly and haughtily.

"Yet I offer you my confidence, Ida, while I am an heir of a larger estate than the Grange."

"I account for it on the ground of our mutual friendship."

George read earnestly her sweet, flushed face, and it seemed he loved her then better than life itself.

"I think I said my union with Maude would not be a happy one; and, as my little confidante, I tell you why. I fear my heart is given to another, a less dowered maiden, but one I dearly love."

For a moment Ida's breath came in quick spasms, and a sensation of keenest rapture thrilled over her; she raised her eyes timidly, but he was not looking in her own with the tender, loving look she expected. He was dreamily gazing on the emerald sea without.

Little did she know the superhuman effort he was making to keep her name from his lips; little did she know that he resigned her hand from his grasp because he durst not retain it. Soul of honor that George Casselmaine ever was, he would go no further than drop these hints, so vague and uncertain, until a proper time should come, which in his soul he felt *would* come, which he resolved *should* come. And Ida, when she met no answering beam from his far-away eyes, felt a strange, numbing coldness creep over her. A heavy weight settled over her, which would not be shaken off.

She made no reply, and he continued:

"I shall depend on you, friend Ida, when I see this beautiful lady-love, for your interest in my behalf. May I depend on it?"

This time their eyes met. His not as Ida had dreamed a lover's ought to be, while he was trying to throw all the carelessness possible in their dark depths, so false a mirror of the heart beneath. She forced a smile to her lips, and a light to her aching eyes. And Casselmaine, in the might of his love, thought she might have

divined the hidden meaning of his language. Yet he made no sign.

"Certainly, Mr. Casselmaine. Whatever I can do to serve my friends I gladly undertake."

"Then my errand is accomplished, and I shall return to the Grange. We will see each other in a week at furthest, and then I will beg your intercession for me with my sweetheart."

He took her hand, and raised it respectfully to his lips.

At that moment black Hetty opened the door with a flourish, and ushered in two ladies.

Maude Elverton and Miss Joyce!

They bowed coldly to Ida, and very haughtily to George, who addressed Maude immediately.

"Miss Elverton, this meeting is most opportune. We shall have a pleasant walk home, for I half dreaded the solitary walk."

He advanced to her, graceful and unembarrassed, while Helen, blushing and confidential, sat by Ida, whose face was flushed to the hue of the carnation.

"Thank you; I think the sudden interruption of so charming a *passage d'amour* very inopportune."

Maude's words were bitterly sarcastic.

"Miss Elverton, as his hostess I am bound to defend my guest. Mr. Casselmaine is perfectly innocent of the charge you fling upon him."

"Of course; I beg you will not allow our unfortunate *entrée* to annoy you."

Helen Joyce spoke in her scathing tones. Ida blushed, and Casselmaine replied:

"Maude, an explanation is due you, which I desire to make to you privately. Will you accompany me to the Grange? Miss Joyce will remain with Miss Tressel and make the necessary apologies."

His face was flushed from excitement.

Maude haughtily accepted the invitation, and together they made their adieu to Ida, who was left alone with Helen Joyce.

"It is altogether accidental that Maude and I should surprise George here. We were out for a promenade, and stopped for a rest."

It struck Ida uncomfortably that Helen Joyce should speak of Mr. Casselmaine as "George," and she told her so.

"Bless us, child, doesn't every girl call her lover by his Christian name? At least George wishes me to call him so, and he usually addresses me as 'Helen' or 'Nellie.'"

Her viper-like eyes were fastened on Ida's pale face, eager to read the thought that flitted across it.

Ida laughed, but Helen knew it was a fearfully forced laugh.

"Why, you surprise me beyond measure. I thought Mr. Casselmaine was engaged to Maude Elverton?"

"So he was," responded Helen, lightly, folding plait after plait in Ida's white apron; "so he is considered still. But he and Maude mutually annulled the betrothal, and I think Maude will marry Mr. Trevlyn. And George was only too glad to be released, for he confessed to having loved me—me, Ida, isn't it strange?—ever since he saw me."

A maidenly blush of modesty spread over the face of the traitress.

"He seemed very ill at ease before Maude, did he not? I think it was she who corrected him for venturing to touch his lips to my hand."

"Yes, it was Maude," returned Helen. "She thinks he should have been more loyal to me. But I haven't the least objection in the world. I am content to know that I shall be his wife, and then—oh! the different times we will see at the Villa! I intend to change the order of things in a style that will astonish my old father."

The dutiful daughter nodded toward the porch where her father and Mr. Tressel sat.

"I saw him talking to your father when I came past. He comes every day, doesn't he? I heard him say he thought a great deal of Mr. Tressel."

Ida remained silent; a dreadful gloom filled her heart. She saw no ray of light in the future, no gleam of hope. Every thing was shut away from her, and the one glorious dream of life and love had flown forever.

"I guess I had better walk on after them," remarked Helen. "I see Mr. Trevlyn coming down the road, and as he will walk by Maude, of course George will want me."

Carelessly she drew her sash around her shapely shoulders, and bade Ida adieu. (To be continued—Commenced in No. 13.)

My Passengers.

BY GEO. S. KAIME.

I WAS conductor on the "through-freight," on the H— and K— railroad. I had the night run, getting on at eight o'clock in the evening, and making the trip down and back in twelve hours.

One night in October of 1880, as I was at the station waiting for my train, a coach drove up to the freight-house, and the driver, from his seat, called to know if Jack Hanson was there. I answered to my name, and stepped across the platform to the carriage.

"Jack," said the driver, "here's a gentleman and lady who want to go down with you. They missed the express, and"—in an undertone—"I thought perhaps you would not mind taking a few dollars."

I was not allowed to take passengers, and I refused at once.

"I will only add that a lady, strongly resembling my young passenger, is looking over my shoulder as I write, and that she is known as 'Maude Hanson,' née 'Castleton.'"

An elderly gentleman and a young lady now stepped out of the coach. They were both well dressed, and had that unmistakable air of good-breeding which can only be acquired by contact with refined society; but this fact did not affect my decision.

"It is absolutely necessary that we should go," said the gentleman, who had heard my refusal. "This young lady's mother lies at the point of death, and every moment of delay is an agony of suspense to her. I know the rules of the company, but Mr. S— (naming the superintendent) 'is a personal friend, and I will stand between you and all blame.'"

The young lady had thrown aside her veil, and the light from my lantern revealed a face of transcendent beauty.

"You will not refuse me?" said she, in a low, musical voice, yet so sad-toned that I could not doubt the anguish in her heart.

Of course I yielded; and within half an hour my two passengers were seated in the "caboose," and I had given the signal to "go ahead."

Our train was a long one, but composed principally of "empties," going down for wheat, so we rattled along at a high rate of speed. The night was warm, and I had thrown open one side-door of the "caboose." My two passengers occupied seats near it, looking out into the night; I lounged upon a side-bench; while the brakemen had gone up on "deck." Supposing my passengers would not care to talk, I did not seek to draw them into conversation.

We rode for an hour or more in silence, and I could not see that my passengers spoke during the time. Then the gentleman left his seat, and stepping to the door, looked back over the road.

"I see that you have another train behind," said he, in a clear, distinct voice. "Step this way, Maude, and you can see the light."

The lady arose and went to his side, while I hastened to the rear door, for I could not see why a "wild" train had been put upon the road. To my surprise I saw no light, and was turning about to question the gentleman, when a piercing shriek rung through the car, almost stunning me with its shrill, rending tones. I turned, and the sight that met me froze me with horror.

Struggling on the very threshold of the open door—struggling with that strength which desperation alone can give—struggling for life against the strength of her companion, was my lady passenger. One little white hand grasping the iron handle of the door was her only dependence, and how soon that might fail her!

I sprang forward and seized her arm. At the same moment the man lost his footing, and fell headlong out of the door—in to eternity. No—great Heavens! he still clung to the poor woman's other arm with a death grip, and begged piteously for me to save him. But I could not help him. I could not loose my hold of the lady's arm even for a second or they would both go to their death; so, with every muscle aching with the continued strain, I held my grip, and closed my ears to his appeals, while the lady, with her eyes looking into mine, bore the agony with a smile upon her face.

Thus we rode I knew not how long, and I asked myself the question, whether I, striving for another's life, could hold out as long as one struggling for his own life? I felt that I could, for I had the advantage; and again, that beautiful face, so near my own, had become very dear to me during that short season of peril. Two lives against one! I would have died rather than yield.

But the end came at last. Even love of life could not prolong human endurance beyond a certain limit, and with a shriek of mortal terror, the dangling wretch slipped his hold. Simultaneously with his fall, was a slight jar of the old caboose, and I knew that one life was ended.

The moment I felt the weight give way, I drew the now-insensible form of the lady further into the car. Then I staggered toward my lantern, but it was some moments before I had sufficient control over my arms to pick it up. I succeeded at last, and signalled to stop. The boys came back, and I told them my story. We backed up a few miles, but failed to find the body. As I was running on "close time," I could not delay, so we started on again and made the down trip in safety.

The lady recovered from her swoon and made explanations. The man was her uncle, and as her mother was very sick, he had taken this method to get the daughter, Maude Castleton, out of the way, that he might take the immense property. His words to me were for the purpose of drawing my attention away for a moment, while he pushed her out. Failing, he yet struggled to effect his design, with the result that we have seen.

I went with Maude to her home, and found Mrs. Castleton very sick indeed, but under her daughter's care, she recovered.

I suffered no inconvenience from that night's adventure, save a pair of stiff arms for a few days, and lost time during the investigation. I was not only exonerated from all blame, but was warmly commended for my action.

The man's body never was found; from which I infer that we were crossing a bridge when he fell, and the water took him away.

I will only add that a lady, strongly resembling my young passenger, is looking over my shoulder as I write, and that she is known as "Maude Hanson," née "Castleton."

Our Ballads.

THE AGE OF GOLD.

BY RAOUL DE MAQUENOISE.

They tell us of a golden age,
When the earth was in its pristine state,
And we read it on the classic page
That all was better than of late;
That fruits would grow without being sown,
And the land flowed with milk and honey,
That pride and selfishness were unknown,
And the grasping greed for money;
That gold was not more precious than tin,
And valued no higher than trash;
That it was not even deemed a sin
To be deficient in cash!
But, the age of gold is now, I ween,
When the supply is not so ample,
When of gold there is nothing to be seen,
Except here and there a sample—
When excited men, be they young or old,
Run frantic through the street,
And ask what is the price of gold
Of every one they meet.
A good topic after greeting is
The weather, but now hot or cold:
The first interesting topic on meeting is,
"Good-morning! how is gold?"
The drygoods merchant who has sold
A heavy stock that day,
Will, when he hears of the fall in gold,
Feel happy, brisk and gay.
A Frenchman puffs and blows away
The smoke of his cigar,
As chuckling he walks along Broadway,
"Ten thousand made, by Gar!"
A crowd of women, boys and men,
Stand round the bulletin;
Amongst them is a clergyman,
Like other men of sin.
Why should not this Servant of the Lord
Be anxious for the news?
It will not affect the sacred Word,
But may, the price of pew!
And workmen, too, an interest take;
And clerks of different ages;
They do not know but it may make
A difference in their wages.
The seamstress looks with anxious dread,
For her cash is nearly spent,
She is thinking how on a spool of thread,
She may save a single cent.
The tidy servant girl, who has come
From the country called "old,"
Does, when she thinks of her friends at home,
Gladly hail the fall in gold.
A wife and husband sit in sweet caress;
Of kisses he gets a shower;
She is aiming at a new silk dress,
"My dear, gold is much lower!"
The cat sits on a sofa near,
And there, as usual, purrs,
It seems she would like the news to hear,
It might change the price of furs.
At present it seems that every palm
Much after gold is itching;
It makes us excited, makes us calm,
It is enticing and bewitching.
To the golden calf every knee is bent,
From our illustrious cigar smoker
To the new candidate for President,
Or the Broad street curb-stone broker.
But the rage is not in Wall street alone,
No, if it was only there!
It is where the metal never shone
It pervades the very air.
It prevails where gold is and where it is not,
Takes hold of the rich and the poor;
It enters the mart, the palace and cot;
It affects both the dandy and boor.
Gold was esteemed in the days of yore,
In many a heathen temple;
But never has been thought of more
Than in this, our Christian time.

Cruiser Crusoe:

OR,

LIFE ON A TROPIC ISLE.

BY LAFAYETTE LAFORST.

NUMBER SIXTEEN.

WHAT to do I did not know. My powder-horn was well supplied, my bullets were not out, and there would be no difficulty in picking off half a dozen of them, if so inclined. But there were two very serious objections to this course of proceeding. In the first place, it was cruel to slay, almost without motive, a number of ignorant savages; and then, common sense whispered to me that the startling effect of fire-arms might wear out, and its constant repetition induce the negroes to think, and, perhaps, penetrate a part of the mystery.
But what are they about? Several of the negroes, after carefully examining the tree, are collecting dry boughs, green boughs, and leaves, and piling them in and around the hollow trunk in great quantities, and so arranged as to burn quickly and smoke as much as possible. The horrid conviction flashed across my mind that they were about to put me to the ordeal by fire.
Then I heard the crackle of the flames, and the smoke rose in a dense cloud, which appeared to exclude all nature from my view. This lasted but an instant when it became a steady and solid column. I sat shivering on my bough. There was no chance of safety, unless I fired at the savages, and descending the tree in the confusion, escape without being seen.
But what is this? The smoke is stealing up now through the hollow trunk, and escaping by numerous holes just where the branches fork. But what is escaping with them? Surely, I am not mistaken. They are wild bees, and the cannibal negroes are smoking them out in search of their most delicious luxury—honey.
This was a relief. They had not discovered me, but while wandering in the wood had fallen upon the signs which indicate the presence of honey. It was, indeed, a piece of good fortune, that ascending, as I did, by the assistance of the India-rubber vine, I kept clear of the hive, and did not disturb the little animals, by no means, when in a passion, to be despised.
But now, what was to be done? In my faint and hungry state a meal of honey, washed down by palm wine, would be delightful, and I resolved to obtain it at any price. But how? Instantly a plan flashed

through my mind, daring, audacious and dangerous, but which, in my half-lunatic state, appeared to me both ludicrous and feasible. No one who has not tried it can tell the state of mind produced by hunger.

It is painful at first, but before it reaches the point of agony, it becomes dreamy—it puts you into a kind of torpor, from which you wake with wild and strange notions floating through your brain.

Placing my gun on a bough, I looked down and saw that the hottest part of the fire was close under me. This observed, I poured half of my gunpowder into a small shot-pouch, which I then stuffed into one of the palm calabashes, and corked up tightly by means of a palm-nut husk—so tightly, indeed, that I could not have taken it out again.

Taking careful aim, and marking where the fire was deepest and hottest, I poised it over the fire, and it dropped with a whirr and a rush into the flames. The savages started back in amazement, looked up at the tree, glanced at one another, and began jabbering and pointing upward. It was a very anxious moment. They, doubtless, believed that some animal was in the tree, perhaps a monkey, and a shower of arrows shot from such a body would be almost certain not to fail in their mark.

The conference lasted, perhaps, two minutes, when I saw one of the Indians poise his spear and then cautiously approach the fire. He was about to examine into the nature of the object which had fallen. Of course the palm-wine calabash would be recognized. What then? The savage stirred the fire with the end of his lance, and seemed pondering on the round bullet-shaped mass.

But his stirring agitated the flames, and, for a moment, concealed the thing from view. Then, as if to roll it out, he pushed it—it fell to pieces, and, with a loud and startling explosion, the fire was scattered right and left over the wonder-stricken and yelling band.

Before the smoke had cleared away, and I could peer down upon the scene below, not a sign of savage, male or female, was to be discovered.

There was no time to be lost; so, securing every thing firmly to my person, I slid down, and, the bees, having by this time taken their departure, at once cut through the soft bark, and made an incision which laid bare the most magnificent live I ever saw. I devoured it greedily, all the while pouring as much as I could into one of the gourds, as part provision for my journey.

Then, having—using caution—filled the other with water, I turned my back on the Fan village, and struck for the hills, keeping myself carefully concealed by means of bushes and trees. As soon as I was at the foot of the rocks, I sought a sufficient shelter, and, lying down, enjoyed something like a pleasant sleep.

As soon as night fell I awoke, and, moving along slowly and deliberately, gained the narrow cavern or gully which led upward from that sea-girt spot into the interior of the island.

I traveled a mile or two more by the faint light of a moon that was continually obscured by clouds, and then again halted to wait for morning.

It broke glorious and warm. I had, indeed, by the darkness, left the proper path, and taken too much to the left for the track I intended to follow. My goal now was my lake-house, my summer-house, and my animals, to which I hoped to find added that one charming companion to whom all the rest were dress—something better and more delightful than gold. The place where I had halted was a charming spot. There was, at no great distance, a small lake or pond, in which wild ducks were bathing and fishing, while I could see fishing-hawks and eagles watching them from aloft. Some graceful palm trees hung over the water, and what added a charm to the scene, were a number of bright-feathered parrots and other beautiful birds, with squirrels of all shapes and sizes running up into the palm trees and feeding on its bunches of yellow nuts.

It was a spot, one of many in my island, that made me, in after days, give it the name of a smaller one near the Gaboon river—Corisco, the Beautiful. I found many such lakes, and all begirt with a broad green belt of grass, dotted with flowers of every hue. There were trees loaded with nests like little cones, of an azure tint, in which birds deposited eggs of a pale golden color; there were butterflies of topaz and emerald on every blooming bush; there were beetles, with breasts of sapphire, and humming-birds, and little parrots, which balanced themselves carelessly, rocked by the faint breath of the breeze, over the bosom of flowers tinted like the bright rays of the setting sun.

The flowers were many and varied; long lines of rose-bushes were shaded by Chinese lilacs; and the chorus of birds was deafening. The widow-bird and the dove sent forth their notes from among the trees, and the mocking-bird whistled his eccentric song. I thought of the poet who said that their sweet strains, sad and harmoniously, lost in the silence of the desert, reached his ears like the lost sighs of a dying virgin, and filled his heart with melancholy.

But I must confess just then I regarded every thing living with any but poetical feelings. I was hungry!

But though I longed to make the rocks ring with the echoes of my gun, and thus procure some food, I did not dare shoot.

I was still too near the Fan village, whose warriors might, indeed, be close to me, on the track of the Indian girl. I descended, however, to the lake, and bathed my feet, which both restored me and caused me to make a discovery, that of some stray ducks' eggs, which were, of course, greedily devoured.

This done, I rose, and skirting the little lake, turned in the direction of the way by which I had followed the savages, and which I believed to be the direct route to my summer-house. But, here again I met with a surprise, for close to the lake, in a very different direction from that which I expected she would have taken, were the tracks of the horse, by means of which she had escaped.

I paused. What was now the right plan for me to follow? Doubtless, whatever devious course she might pursue, her aim was to return to my habitation, or why had she visited it at all? At the same time, there were very mysterious incidents connected with her, which I could not satisfactorily explain, and which left me in a cloud of doubt and perplexity.

Still, it was more prudent to follow, and upon this course I determined. The track of the horse, whose marks were those of one used to be ridden, led me for some time across the prairie, and then through a thick wood, where I observed the rider had alighted, walked, and led the mare.

Then came an open space, half trees, half bushes, where she had mounted again and pursued her way. It was easy enough to follow, but my strength, it was apparent, was quite spent. The fatigue, the worry, anxiety and trouble, the hours I had passed wading in water and then sleeping in my clothes, were telling on me.

I was ill. A severe cough hacked and tore my chest, so that I could scarcely make any way. But, heavens! what do I see? A column of smoke rising from a wood at no great distance. Then the girl had halted, made a fire, and awaited my approach. Roused to new exertion by this circumstance, I rallied and started on my way. It was a grove of moderate-sized trees to which I was advancing, and in another minute I was close to the fire.

I stepped lightly and warily, not to alarm her. I might have saved myself the trouble. She had been there, it is true, for there was the fire, there were the signs of the horse; and a number of feathers and bones showed that she had succeeded in trapping some kind of game. It was a disappointment, but I was so used to them, that it did not move me. On the contrary, the remains of a very fat bird, ready roasted and placed near the embers, served to revive me.

But why was it left? She must be under the impression that I was following in her wake, and had left this as a sign.

My heart beat with grateful emotions and pleasant sensations, so that, after a meal of roast bird, honey and water, I arose with a feeling of refreshment such as I had not had for some days. A small stream close at hand enabled me to refill my calabash, and then on again, always following the horse's track.

That night I slept under the shelter of a palm tree. When I awoke my limbs were stiff, my feet sore and bleeding. I had been walking without moccasins for a whole day over stones and amid briars and thorns. It was a fearfully still morning, portending heat and storm. Not a sign of life was to be seen, save insect life. I could see a spider's web or two. The gloom, indeed, was something quite appalling.

As soon as my body felt refreshed, I rose, but was obliged to cut a thick stick to aid me in my walk. I was inclined to throw away my gun, but forbore, as at any moment I might meet animals, against which it would prove my only chance of safety.

About a quarter of a mile from my resting-place, I came to the edge of a plain, at the end of which I could make out the hills which doubtless surrounded my beloved home, for which I sighed now with an ardor such as never had overwhelmed me before. I could see the green verdure that clothed them from top to bottom, and so started across, after one heartfelt and fervent prayer to God.

What decided me may as well be confessed—she had gone that way.

The sun was hot, the sky was blue, not a breath of air agitated the scanty grass that grew upon that stony plain. My feet were in a dreadful state, so that at every step I took, leaning on my staff, I groaned aloud. In my agony I felt almost inclined to shriek with despair, but forbore for shame for my manhood. Luckily I had water, or I must then and there have died. Several times I sat down, and looked around at the arid soil, gave one glance at the heavens above, and while listening to the "cri-cri" of the grasshopper, envied their power of locomotion.

Oh! but for a breath of good wholesome wind. That would have roused, revived me. But it came not, and fearful that if I gave way too much I should die, I hurried on as fast as my tottering limbs would carry me. Slow as was the progress I made, still hours will show some result, and very soon the distant hills seemed to become more distinct, the trees more sharply defined, the verdure more sparkling and real.

Then I tottered. The heat seemed to scorch me, and with one wild, despairing cry, I fell flat on my face—to die.

Adrift on a Raft.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

It was midnight on an island off the southern coast of Florida—midnight, dark, tempestuous and starless. The angry waves lashed the hundred jagged rocks, and sang a wild dirge for the noble tars slumbering far beneath their white surface.

Lanterns, held by brawny hands, moved in every direction along the beach. Now they were lowered as their holders stooped to examine a box, or the body of some poor sailor; now raised over the wreckers' heads as they strove to pierce the almost palpable gloom that slept upon the gulf.

Among the uncouth wreckers, that fearful night, a woman moved. She was tall, and exceedingly lovely, although she was entering her fortieth year. Her dark tresses contrasted singularly with her white face, and there was a flash in her dark eye that boded evil to those who incurred her displeasure. She walked along the rocky beach attended by a young girl.

The loveliness of the frail girl who accompanied the woman was of the angelic cast, and the terrific winds that swept among the wet rocks sent a visible shudder over her beautiful form.

"I fear that but few articles have, as yet, reached the beach," said the woman, addressing her attendant. "The vessel surely went to pieces, for I distinctly heard her part amidstships when she struck the breakers."

The young girl looked up into the woman's face, which wore a look of disappointment, and a sad expression crossed hers.

"Mother," she said, "I can not conceive how you can live such a life. Oh, why do you not break off from the wild, uncouth men who call you their queen, and lead a better life?"

"Hush, Iona! If one of the men should hear your words, I could not save you from a terrible doom. I will not desert my brave fellows," she continued. "As long as I live I will be the wreckers' queen, and when I have gone you must take my place."

"Never!" exclaimed the young girl, with a determined air. "I will never be the wreckers' queen. I will never rule a band of men whose hands are against every man and every man's hands against them."

"You will get over this when you have lived among them as long as I. A few years more, Iona, and you will yearn for my death that you may become the queen of the brave wreckers."

"Never!"

The strange twain went on some distance in silence, when the queen of the lawless wreckers of Wrecker Island suddenly exclaimed:

"Look yonder, Iona. My subjects have found something. Let us hasten thither."

They left their position and hurried toward a high ledge of rocks where a score of wreckers had congregated. A dozen lanterns flashed their light over the motley group, and it fell upon faces on which were traceable

"Dark tales of many a ruthless deed."

"By Jove! that's a nice ring," the approaching couple heard a man in the center of the group say. "And I tell ye it belongs to me. Didn't I disfigure 'im first, say? Of course I did, so stand back, an' let me cut the finger off!"

"No you don't, Wild Tom," said another voice. "I see'd the body first, an' the man what says I didn't lies like perdition. Stand back yourself, an' let me have what is mine."

"Not so easy, Steel Fist," said the other. "At the pint of the toothpick an' over my carcass ye get the ring, ef ye get it a tall. Come on!"

"They will fight, Iona!" cried the wrecker queen, who had heard every word from her quarrelsome subjects. "I can illy spare a man. They must not kill one another like dogs," and she darted away toward the group, which was forming a circle to give the contending wreckers "fair play."

"Oh, I do wish that mother would abandon this wild, wicked life!" cried the young girl, flinging herself upon the rocks. "I have prayed so often that God would give her a better heart and lead her away from among these bad men. Oh, 'tis a wretched life I live here. I try to be pure; but it is a hard task when encompassed by a chain of sin."

She hid her tear-stained face in her hands, and mingled her sobs with the moan of the waves. She heard the wicked words that escaped the quarrelsome wreckers' lips, and presently the voice of her she called mother reached her ears.

"Make way, men!" cried the wrecker queen.

A path was quickly made for her, and darting through the group, she planted herself between the angry twain.

"Shame fall upon you, men!" she said, pointing derisively at them. "Quarreling for a ring! I thought better deeds of you. Wild Tom, depart this instant to Sea-gull's Nest, and build a fire there; and you, Steel Fist, perform the same duty at Turtle's Cove. Go!"

The two wreckers did not move, but regarded their queen with sullen looks.

The woman was astounded, for never before had her command been disobeyed.

"Did you not hear me, villains?" she said.

"Yes," they answered at the same moment.

"Then why do you not obey?"

"I ain't goin' till I get that ring," said Steel Fist, pointing to the bauble that glittered on the pale finger of the dead sea-captain who lay before them.

"He shan't hev the ring!" cried Wild Tom, again raising his dirk. "I'll cut his heart out if ye gin it to 'im."

"Neither of you shall have the ring," said the woman, whom we will call Viola. "You have shown yourselves unworthy of belonging to my band. I will not punish you if you obey with alacrity my command of a few moments ago."

"What do you want a fire in the 'Nest' for?" demanded the beetle-browed wrecker known among his associates as Wild Tom. "Do you dare question your queen?" was the demand, accompanied by a withering look.

"Yes, by thunder!"

"An' what do ye want a fire in the cove for?" cried Steel Fist. "I'm not a-goin' to the infernal place."

Viola in silence regarded the mutineers a moment and stepped aside. She knew that the two fellows had many friends among her band, and that but few of them were present. The insult they had offered her by disobeying her commands demanded that they should be punished, and at once—before those disposed to aid them arrived.

The remainder of the band before her were loyal, and she proceeded at once to punish the traitors.

Glancing around upon the forms of her subjects, her eyes fell upon two stalwart fellows standing shoulder to shoulder. A certain sign to them, and the traitors would be secured. Hesitating not a moment, she gave the sign, and, quick as lightning, the villains were in bonds.

After the traitors had been bound, silence reigned. The wreckers were waiting for the doom of the disobedient.

"Wild Tom and Steel Fist," said Viola, after a minute's thought, "you have disputed my authority, and, for so doing, you must die. It is my command, therefore, that you be put upon a raft and set adrift."

The traitors did not reply, as Viola evidently expected, and she resumed:

"You know that your hands are against every man, and every man's hands against you. Therefore, if you are picked up by any vessel, it were better for you had you never been born. Black Ben, I appoint you the executioner of the traitors' sentence. Report at daylight."

Then she gave the doomed men a parting glance, and walked toward the spot where she had left Iona.

To the northern beach of the island Black Ben, the Portuguese, conducted his prisoners, and soon a raft was constructed. The men were placed aboard and their guns lashed to one of the logs of the raft. An old barrel containing a few pounds of poor meat was also put on the raft, and a long pole and a knife were thrown to the doomed men, as their sailless vessel was pushed out into the gloom and the waves.

The wreckers were more merciful than their queen, and pitied the traitors. Therefore, they had given them their guns, a pole to steer with, and a knife to sever their bonds.

It was a strange situation in which the two enemies found themselves, and in silence they severed each other's bonds. Would they renew the quarrel, or would they weld the broken chain of friendship and become inseparable companions in danger?

For an hour they drifted on in silence—Wild Tom sitting on the barrel using the pole to the best advantage, and Steel Fist grasping the knife.

At last Tom's husky voice rent the veil of silence:

"Why don't you speak, Steel Fist?"

"I thought ye war mad, an' I warn't goin' to speak first."

"Well, I war mad over that ring, but I'm over that. Now, since that she-devil has sent us out here to die, let us be friends an' stand by each other."

"Agreed, Tom," cried Steel Fist, reaching out his hand in the darkness. "Give me your paw on't."

At last they found each other's hands and sealed the compact of renewed friendship.

On, on through the storm and the white waves went the wreckers, scarcely hoping to see the dawn of another day. Scarcely a word they uttered through the to them seemingly endless night, but sat on the planks that separated them from eternity and brooded over their dreadful situation.

But He whose divine commandments they had so often broken, pitied them, and permitted the roseate dawn to gladden their watchful eyes. After partaking of the meat in the barrel, Steel Fist resumed the pole and steered the raft, keeping clear of the breakers whose terrible roar they had often heard.

As the long dreary hours waned, thirst began to torment the wreckers, and with the arrival of night Wild Tom was a raving madman. Steel Fist, scarcely better off, watched his companion, wondering how soon the same wild words would part his own parched lips.

"Steer to the shore, Steel Fist!" cried mad Wild Tom, pointing in his ravings toward a low black beach bounded by breakers. "There is a fountain of water, clear as crystal. Turn the raft, or the people will

get all of it. Oh! how clear it is! See how it is going to waste! Steer shoreward for God's sake, Steel Fist, for I want to drink out of that fountain!"

Steel Fist did not reply to Tom's ravings, but looked ahead and longed to see the sails of a vessel, where he knew, if taken aboard, death at the yard-arm awaited him.

But night closed around them without greeting them with the sight of sails, and sleeplessly through it the waves bore them. At midnight Tom's ravings were so terrible and his exertions to quit the raft so great, that Steel Fist was compelled to lash him to the planks.

Another morning! The scarcely sane wrecker hoped he would not live to see it close. His thirst was torment unbearable, and his tongue was actually cracking. He dared not eat more of the meat, for its extreme saltiness would but serve to increase his thirst.

With bloodshot eyes he gazed around. There was

"Water, water everywhere,
But not a drop to drink."

The forenoon of the day was closing when the sails of a vessel greeted the strained vision of Steel Fist. He could not repress an exclamation of joy. Wild Tom was sleeping, and from his slumbers Steel Fist roused him. Tom looked at the approaching ship, and, forgetting his thirst, he immediately became sane.

"Signal her, Steel Fist."

"They will hang us to the yard-arm, Tom."

Then Tom felt his thirst again.

"If they let me drink first they can hang me," he said.

"Ay, that they may, Tom," responded Steel Fist. "I'd sell my life for a drop of water—just one single drop."

Steel Fist fastened his coat to the pole and signaled the vessel. Presently a boat put off toward them, and they left the raft, which went to pieces on the breakers a moment later.

Reaching the ship, which proved to be the White Eagle, from New York, the two wreckers read in the faces of the sailors their doom.

It was a period when the wreckers of the islands off the coast of Florida were luring many good ships to destruction by false beacons, and, thereby, sending hundreds of noble youths to untimely graves beneath the waves.

The vengeance of our sailors was roused against the miscreants, and whenever one was caught he was quickly and summarily dealt with.

Tom and Steel Fist were at once recognized as wreckers, and the sailors clamored for their death. A few minutes later ropes were displayed, and the couple commanded to prepare to meet the mighty Judge.

But a minute separated them from eternity, when the commander of the White Eagle stepped forward and confronted them. He was a young sailor of prepossessing appearance, but wore a look of sadness on his otherwise cloudless countenance.

"Boys," he said, addressing the sailors, "you know what I am about to say to these men, who are near the doors of doom. The question I have asked a thousand times, but the answer I seek has never gladdened my heart. Need I now exact from you, brave fellows, the promise so often given that the satisfactory answer of my question shall live?"

"No!" cried the gallant tars of the staunch White Eagle.

Then the young captain turned again to the wreckers.

"Do you know a young girl with golden hair living among the wreckers?"

"With blue eyes?" interrupted Steel Fist.

"Yes," cried the captain, his face lighting up with hope.

"I know such a gal."

The captain grasped Steel Fist's arm.

"Are you sure of it, man?" he cried.

"Mind that you do not lie, for, if you raise my hopes to dash them to the earth, there's no telling what I'll do with you. A girl with golden hair and blue eyes, I said. Tell me truly, do you know such?"

"I told you I did and I never lie," said Steel Fist. "Tom here knows her, too."

Tom corroborated his companion's statement, and for some moments the captain was speechless.

"It is sweet! Oh, I am sure that it is my lost Endora—the sweet little creature who loved me when I was a guileless child. But they took her away, and the wreckers lured the ship to destruction. Ever since I have searched for her, and I feel that I am to be rewarded at last."

Thus spoke the captain in the exuberance of his joy. His pause was sudden and when he regained his breath he inquired:

"Is there a scar on her arm near the elbow?"

"Yes, I saw it once," said Steel Fist.

"No doubt remains now," cried the captain. "She is my long lost Endora. But where is she?"

Steel Fist described the island where the haughty Viola reigned over the fierce wreckers, and offered to guide the White Eagle to it.

His services were joyfully accepted, and he was told that if he played them false death was the portion of both. But they had no intention of playing the sailors false; it was sweet to be avenged on their queen; and nobly the two wreckers fulfilled their promises.

In due time Wrecker's Island hove in sight, and in boats the sailors attacked the ship-destroyers. Bravely Viola fought, and when the sailors were beating the wreckers, she flew to her cave intending to put Iona to death. But the cavern was empty—Wild Tom and Steel Fist had executed a flank movement, and borne Iona to the arms of the companion of her youth, and lover of her maturer years.

Maddened at her loss, the wrecker queen took her own life, and when the cave was entered after the victory, she was found cold in the embrace of death.

On the deck of the White Eagle Iona learned that her name was Endora Lindsay, and that Viola, the queen of the wreckers, was not her mother.

Though her parents slept beneath the waves of the gulf, she found that there was one who dearly loved her—Captain Lionel Roberts. Of her first acquaintance with the inhabitants of Wrecker's Island she recollected nothing. She could not tell what avidly Viola grasped her the night the waves bore her ashore, and swore to raise her up to succeed her as queen of the wreckers.

The "lost Endora" being found, Lionel Roberts quitted forever the decks of the White Eagle, and now, an old man, is living with his early love in one of our great western cities.

As for Wild Tom and Steel Fist, they tried to make amends for their wicked life by being good law-abiding citizens, and to their credit be it said, they succeeded admirably.

Camp-Fire Yarns.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID.

The Chased Corpse.

A TALE OF THE CROSS-TIMBERS.

Who has not heard of the "Cross-Timbers"—that singular tract of forest, trending in two distinct belts through the northern prairies of Texas, from False Washita to the Brazos?

This district, now studded with settlements, flourishing farms and populous villages—was, but a few years ago, a wilderness uninhabited by white men, almost unknown to them. Not a howling wilderness, however, except when occasionally through its forest aisles rung the war-whoop of the Comanche, the Kiowa, or Waco Indian. Otherwise it was a sort of Paradise in the midst of the prairies; its shady groves, and verdant meads, with the streams that fertilized them, making it the favorite abode of the deer, the hunter and trapper, as it has since drawn the agricultural colonist.

A strange, mysterious region was the Cross-Timbers, in those days the subject of much speculation to the trapper and prairie traveler, as also to the learned geognosist, who could not account for this singular outcrop of timber, rising up amid the bare plains, and running in two grand groves for scores of miles northward and southward.

This singularity, along with the numerous trapper tales and scientific speculations relating to it, invested the region of the Cross-Timbers with an interest, that drew thither more than one amateur band of explorers and expeditionists; and of one of these that started from Nacogdoches in 18—, was I a member. It is not now my purpose to chronicle the incidents of the expedition, but simply to relate an adventure that had occurred to one of the party, who had been out to the Cross-Timbers before, and who was acting as our guide.

What this man's name was I never knew; he was called by us "Spot," or oftener "Old Spot"—the sobriquet being derived from some spot-like tattooings in blue tint, seen upon his breast, which, in warm weather, was always bare.

He told us the tale, one evening while en-

camped by the side of a little grove or island of post-oaks, within sight of a dark belt of forest that hemmed the horizon to the west, and which we knew to be the lower Cross-Timbers.

"The idea was this: To set the corp o' the young fellow on my horse, an' tie him in the saddle as ef he was mounted; then to start the horse off on t'other side o' the island—the track by which we'd come. I knowed the critter w'd streak it back t'ard the settle-

ment, for he knowed the way, an' he knowed too the meanness o' them yellin' kummin' from a hunt. He war already skeert, an' doin' his best."

"I didn't wait for any furrer plannin', but r'd right on to the island, an' in under kiver o' the bushes, the bein' thick, shaded me from the eyes o' the pursuers."

"I reck'n that war niver deer or b'ar meat packed upon hossback quick as I hed that human corp into the saddle, stannin' straight up jest as ef hed been a livin' man. It war stiff long afore, an' the legs tuk purrshum along the stirrup leathers, like a forked branch, nat'ral as ef the feller hed been restin' in the stirrups. Two or three turns o' a trail-rope made all firm an' fast; and the hoss, with his new rider, war ready to continue his course. The young fellow war 'bout my own size; an' as I've tolt ye, he war dressed much the same fashion, all 'ceptin' the head, an' that he hed nuthin' not even the ha'r. But afore startin' him off I lent him my ole wool hat, which kiverin' his red skull, made the resemblance kummin' plete. Thar air some thorny mesquites in the clump, growin' among the post-oaks, as ye see. I broke a branch from one o' them, the jagged I hed see, an' clappin' it under the hoss's tail, started him off, in the right direckshun. He went as ef he war a huntin' him."

"I then turned to see about the pursuers. They war still a good way off, high on a half a mile, for I'd made quick work o' 't. But I see'd they'd soon be up; an' thar war still a hundred chances to one ag'in savin' my skulp. Ef they didn't see the hoss gittin' off on t'other side they'd be sure to ride into the island, an' thar diskliver me afut. They hedn't see'd him yet, for they war still kummin' right on t'ard the timber."

"Thar's a big oak near the center thar loaded w' Spanish moss, as ye kin see. I spied it jest then, an' seein' it w'd give a chance o' concealment, I wormed up an' 'sconced myself among the moss, whar I sot as still as a chased possum."

"I hed see the Injuns as they r'd forrard t'ard the clump. They pulled up, afore

comin' nigh o' it; fearin' in thar usooal way to come 'thrin the range o' a ride, which nat'ally they must 'a' knowed I shed hev along w' me. I hed tell by thar manuevers they hedn't yet spied the hoss, tho' I see'd him streakin' away on t'other side, an' begun to git scared, he mout be out o' sight afore they shed sit eyes on him. All at once, however, I war relieved by hearin' one o' 'em gi'e a long yell, an' seen him start off 'nast the island, w' the lull clanging camp'y follerin' in his tracks."

"In less'n ten minnits the tails o' thar hosses war t'ard me, an' I hed breathe freer. But not yit free. I know'd they'd soon overtake the ole hoss an' overhaul his lifeless rider. Soon as they sot eyes on his skulped crown—the which, no doubt, war done by themselves—they'd know the trick that hed been played them, an' kum back as fast if not faster than they war ridin' out. Fer the 'scape o' the ole hoss I hedn't the frack-shun o' a hope; tho' fur as I hed see him, he war doin' his durndest best, hearin' thar shoutin' abint him, an' knowin' perfectly the nater o' that noise. But, thar war too much puraira, an' he w'd niver git across it afore bein' pulled up by the savage pursuers."

"Back they war boun' to kum an' s'arch every inch o' the island. The moss hedn't then conceal me, nor any thir' else thar. It hed give me a respite, but only to delay death, which 'peared sartin as fate itself."

"What war to be done?"

"At first I didn't think anythin' hed be done, an' hed 'most made up my mind to drop down upon the groun', an' wait for thar comin' back. Since skulkin' hed be no use, I mout as well stan' out, an' meet them like a man. Still this wa'n't a prospect noways agreeable; an' while I war contemplatin' it, my eyes bekim turned in the opposite direckshun t'ard the big timber out yonner. Mout thar be a chance o' reachin' it afore they shed overtake the hoss an' return? Neery chance, as ye see it's full three mile. This chille ain't slow afoot, but three mile over a puraira, w' not so much as a weed to conceal my retreat; the thing wa'n't to be thought o', at leest it hedn't be carried out w' any hope o' succeedin'."

"I see'd this, an' desperaid. I hed as good as giv' it up, when, lookin' that way, my eyes jest chanced to light upon this hyar erik whar we've made camp. Sartin as we sit hyar, thar little stream war the savin' o' my life. Ef it hedn't been for it, Ole Spot hed niver hev 'scaped from this spot 'thout bein' seen by them

MY BOOTS.

BY JOE JOE, JR.

When these old boots were new,
The way we walked was light;
They didn't quite agree with us,
For they were pretty tight.

We then went on the style;
The style it pinched us sore,
And while our foot was number nine,
Those boots were number four.

And yet, in spite of this,
They were a noble pair,
And had a shape that well had made
Most any man despair.

When these old boots were new,
Several years ago,
We had a light heart in our breast,
A corn on every toe.

And then at every dance,
We figured on the floor,
And though we trod on many feet,
They trod on ours the more.

Our feet they went to sleep
When we didn't stir about,
Then while the boots weren't hollow in,
They made us hollow out.

But now these boots are full of years,
And very full of holes—
Light be the dust that covers them,
And peace go with their soles.

Beat Time's Notes.

MARRIAGE will make one happy or miserable. It brings with it all that, ennobles, or all that debases. It augments our pleasures or it increases our pains. It saves on our buttons, or it tears off our paper collars. You may split these differences if you wish, and try it.

We know a fellow whose feet are so long that when he lies down you think he is standing up. His father is so tall that he has to go down in the collar to put on his boots, and has to climb upon a fence to put on his cravat. This we consider is pretty bad for high.

If the milk of your inhuman kindness is well skimmed, take it to the donation party. It has got to be very fashionable to do so.

A VEXATION is to give five dollars in charity and have no one to find it out; and it is another to do a little mean act and have it get into the papers.

If "every man is a volume," some men are written in very poor English.

POEMS written in the garret should have a touch of attic wit.

THE Dutch still hold Holland, and they smoke pipes of tobacco and drink pipes of beer. They talk Dutch with great fluency. They travel on canals, which are by-ways though they are not high (and dry) ways.

ARTICLES on pepper and salt ought to be highly reasonable and spicy.

THE people of Armenia Armenians.

WHEN your landlord tells you it would be better to spread a little bread on your butter, it is a sign that his feelings are high or your board low.

WHEN terrific flashes shoot athwart the lurid sky it's a sign of lightning, and when the contents of the clouds fall like water from a squeezed sponge it is a sign of rain. These signs never fail—even in dry weather.

SOME soldiers get honorable discharges sometimes on the strength of dishonorable charges.

YOU would take some men, by their deportment, to be members of all the churches and saloons in town.

AFTER serious consideration, humorous articles often are declined.

SARDINES are little fish which nobody is disposed to make any bones over while they are disposing of them. They vegetate in little tin boxes, and are smothered in castor oil. There are about a dozen sardines and six nightmares in a box.

SOLOMON was the wisest man because he had so many wives—they taught him something. "The Queen of Sheepy" exclaimed, "So, the half of his wives was never told me?" He could tell a Peter Funk watch from a worse one just by shaking its hands. It is written, "The lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not afraid of one of these."

HERE is a little composition of my boy's which created quite a sensation in the infant class:

"MEN AS I HEV RED OF."

"NOAR. In 18 hundred and I forget what, and when I was yet a little angle in the skies Noar built the ark and went into the show business by getting all the beasts and other fowls into it for he said they were about to have a little rise. Then it began and rained 40 days and nights and would have rained longer if it had had a mind to. Yes it rained 40 days in secession and that's why they say it rains like 40. All the dry land was under water and the walking was very bad. It was the wettest rain in the memory of the oldest inhabitant and was so damp for the fishes that they all drowned, and all the people who couldn't pay their passage was drowned. It dried up the dust business mighty quick and nobody complained of no water in their sisters. Lots of water got into the milk and it's not got all out yet. Well when the water went down the menagery business went down too, and Noar could out his stock to Van Amburgh, in whose tent these animals can be seen, admission 50 cents; boys half price.

"DAVID. When David was a little boy he was a mitey big bully and went out to fight Goliath the great Cardiff giant, and he says to him says he Go, liar! but Goliath didn't go, so he hit him over the head with a rock and sent him home balling to his mamma just like I did Mike O'Brien because he said I stole Smith's chicken after I told him to say nothing about it.

"ALECK SANDER, THE GRATE, was a better man than Heenan he licked the whole world and everybody else and then cried becoz he couldn't get the moon to wear for a shield."

I'm going to have that boy write for the Lodger.

The double rule of three answers very well in arithmetic, but the single rule of two is far better on moonlight nights.

MAN, know thyself! but many a man's self is a stranger which does not improve very much on acquaintance.

BEAT TIME.



ADRIET ON A RAFT.